

TWO 1507/74
DISPUTATIONS

CONCERNING THE
MESSIAH.

One between a
PAPIST and a **JEW**,

The other between a
PROTESTANT and a **JEW**.

CONTAINED

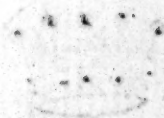
In Two Letters from a Merchant in
London, to his Correspondent in
Amsterdam.



G O R K E

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M,DCC,LVI



1515

A
DISPUTATION

B E T W E E N

A *Papist* and a *Jew*, &c.

Kind Sir,

Y OURS of the 22d of this instant *December* I received ; I give you my hearty thanks for the contents. It may serve in part for a requital, to remit you an account of a late conference between a *Papist* and a *Jew*, at my house. The occasion was this : on the 14th instant, being *Friday*, a Jesuit (one father S.) whom I have always found most friendly and ingenuous, came to my house about noon to get a return for two hundred pounds in *Paris* : I readily complied with his request, and desired him withal to stay and take a short dinner with me. Without much importunity he was persuaded : my dinner was only a dish of salt-fish and a joint of pork roasted : and tho' we had but ordinary cheer, yet down we sat, and were very chearful. Before we had fully dined, in came L. the *Jew*, to discourse with me about a commodity that I had inquired after ; I desired him also to sit down and bear us company. My wife knowing the man, and his manner, said to him, Mr. L. I am sorry that we have nothing here that you can eat. I am sure, said she, (pointing to the pork, the only dish remaining now upon the table) you are for none of this. Father S. (observing what she said, and supposing L. to be a *Roman Catholick*, and that this abstinence did arise from the same scrupulosity with those of that persuasion) began to scrape acquaintance with him,

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and

and asked him what countryman he was, and how long he had lived in this city. I prevented the reply of *L.* and told father *S.* that I judged he was mistaken in my friend, that he was no *Roman Catholick*, but a *Jew*; and refrained pork not because it was *Friday*, and so forbidden by the church of *Rome*, but because it was swines-flesh, and so apprehended it to be forbidden of God. And here it would have made you smile if you had stood by, and heard what a paroxysm, or sharp debate, there arose between father *S.* and my wife about this question, whether he or the Jew had the greatest ground of such abstinence; and to speak without partiality, she put him hard to it. After the table was cleared, father *S.* desired to have some more serious discourse with *L.* and told him, that he wondered, how any man in his right senses could persist in Jewish infidelity; adding withal, that he would undertake in an hour's time to convince him, that the promised Messiah was come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he. *L.* answered, that he was a trader, and altogether unfit to manage a controversy of that moment; and therefore desired to be excused from meddling with it. Father *S.* replied, that it was more than probable there were some of their Priests or Rabbins in this city, and that if he pleased he would meet the ablest of them, and argue this point in his hearing, and he hoped to his conviction and satisfaction. *L.* consented, and promised, if a convenient time and place were appointed, to bring a friend with him for this purpose. I interposed, and offered my house for the place of their meeting, which they well approved of, and appointed that day seven day, at three of the clock in the afternoon, for the time. *L.* desired there might be no noise or notice given of this their intention; alledging that it might be of ill and dangerous consequence to those of their religion, if it should come to the ear of the magistrate. Hereupon they agreed that there should be no words of it, and that no persons besides my wife and I, should be present, but themselves and *L.*'s friend. Upon this they parted, and all three came punctually at the time appointed. I carried them up into a chamber which had a closet in it, where I had placed one that was dexterous in stenography,



nography, and drew the table pretty near the closet-door, that he might hear and write all that past. When they were sat, I made it my request that an intimate friend of mine, who was in the house, might be permitted to come up and be an auditor. This was Mr. B. whom I had habited like a gentleman. They said, if he were a friend of mine, and did desire it, they had nothing against it. Whereupon I brought him in, and set him a chair at a little distance from the table. After a short silence, father S. began and said to L. I suppose this is your friend you spoke of at our last meeting, at this house, and promised to bring with you this day; L. answered, yes, it was; upon which they gave each other a friendly bow or salute. Then they first considered what should be the main question or subject-matter of their conference; and at once it was resolved into this, *whether Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah?* the next thing they considered was, whether this question should be argued syllogistically, the one taking the part of an opponent, the other of a respondent? or whether they should alternately deliver their conceptions in a continued discourse without interrupting one another? L's friend, desired the latter way, because he was not acquainted, as he said, with our way of arguing in the schools. A third thing they resolved upon was this, that the conference should not last above two hours, and that neither of them should speak above half an hour at once. Having agreed to these three preliminaries, father S. began; and after he had a little stated the question, shewing whom he meant by Jesus of Nazareth, and whom he meant by the Messiah, he proceeded thus: "Though I might urge many arguments to prove what I affirm, that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah foretold by the prophets; yet, I shall insist only upon one, and that is, the many miracles that were wrought by himself, and by his followers in his name; which were sufficient to convince the world that he came from God, and that he was that prophet whom your fathers expected, and that God had promised." I fearing that my scribe in the closet could not well hear father S. he spoke so low, (and indeed afterwards I understood I was not deceived) made bold to de-

fire him a little to lift up his voice, which he readily did; and withal followed his argument so closely, and prest it so nervously, that I confess, I was greatly confirmed thereby; and concluded L. and his friend would become his converts, and wondered, with myself, what rejoinder could possibly be meditated by either of them.

His argument he thus formed: "He that testified of himself that he was the Messiah, and confirmed his testimony by many infallible miracles, which were wrought by himself and by his followers in his name, must needs be the Messiah: But Jesus of Nazareth testified thus of himself, and confirmed his testimony by many infallible miracles which were wrought by himself and by his followers in his name; therefore Jesus of Nazareth must needs be the Messiah. The proposition, says he, I suppose, no rational man will deny, whatever his persuasion be in matters of religion; especially if he understand by miracles, as I do, such wonderful works as are contrary to the course of nature, and above and beyond the reach of any mere creature, and as are the product of an almighty power. It cannot be imagined that God, who is the faithful and merciful governor of the universe, would alter the course of nature, and set the seal of his omnipotency to a lie, and suffer the greatest inducement of belief, to be made use of to draw the world into error and perdition. Two things I take for granted, nor can they be rationally gain said; first, That none but God and such as are assisted by him, can work real miracles. Satan and such as are acted and aided by him, may work wonders, such as may breed admiration in the beholders; but to work miracles properly and strictly so called, is above the power of Satan, or any created being. This is the prerogative of him alone, whose power is infinite and unlimited. Secondly, That God never did, nor never will communicate this power, to any, of working miracles to confirm a falshood. To believe or affirm any such thing concerning God, doth border at least upon blasphemy. It is as if God should lend the Devil his seal to sign his delusions, and suffer it too to be done in his name: how then should he govern the world in righteousness? and how deplorable and remediless were the condition

condition of poor mortals, seeing they have no way left them to undeceive themselves, but must run into irrecoverable ruin, and entitle God to their seduction and perdition?

That testimony then, which hath the attestation of miracles, is undoubtedly divine. Hereby *Moses* did prove his mission from God. *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians* did not except against the argument, only they thought, at least for a season, his works and wonders not supernatural, and that their forcerers could vie with him in works of wonder; which, we read in *Exodus*, they attempted by enchantments and diabolical assistance; till at length they acknowledged a divine and supernatural power to work with *Moses*, and ingenuously confessed that it was the finger of God. And had *Moses* affirmed himself to be the Messiah, and continued to work such miracles to confirm it, the *Israelites* and others had been obliged to believe it. They must have concluded, that no man could do the miracles that he did, except God were with him, and wrought in and by him; and that God would never work with a deluder, and lend him his seal (as I said before) to sign his delusions, and deceive the world in his name. *Moses* therefore never had that pretext, but told the people plainly of a Messiah to come, of a prophet that God would raise up to them of their brethren, that should be like unto him, that should come with signs and miracles as he had done, whom they should hearken to and obey.

Accordingly when *Jesus* our Saviour was made of a woman, and manifested in the flesh, the fulness of time being come, the main argument he used, to bring the world to believe in him, was this of signs and miracles. Hence it was that he told his followers, that the works he wrought did bear witness of him; and when the Jews that were round him, asked him how long he made them to doubt, and desired him to tell them plainly if he were the Christ: he answered, that he had already told them; that the works which he did in his Father's name, did testify of him. *Yea*, said he, *if I do not the works of my Father, believe me not: but if I do, although you believe not me, believe the works.* And again he says,
Believe

Believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, or else believe me for the very works sake. He tells them further, *That if he had not done the works amongst them that none other man did, or could do, they had not sinned in not believing in him.* This also we find to be the greater argument upon which so many believed; when they saw the miracles that he did, they said, *This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.* They had been in doubt for a while whether *John the Baptist* was not the Christ; but they quickly considered that *John* wrought no miracles, but all things that *John* spake of Jesus were true; and besides, he had done many miracles, and therefore many believed on him. Thus much for the demonstration of the major proposition.

Now I come to the assumption or minor proposition, which is, that Jesus of Nazareth testified of himself that he was the Messiah, and confirmed his testimony by many infallible miracles which were wrought by himself and his followers in his name. That he testified thus of himself, is not denied. He told the Jews, *Unless you believe that I am he, you shall die in your sins.* This was the main part of that good confession which he witnessed before *Pontius Pilate* the Roman governor; and it was the main quarrel your ancestors had against him: and though they expected about this time the coming of the Messiah, and that for good reasons, because *Daniel's* seventy weeks were run out, and the scepter was departed from *Judah*, and a law-giver from between his feet, and the like; yet they would not hear that Jesus of Nazareth should be the person. Alas! he had not the port and presence of a worldly potentate, such as they dreamed of. When they saw him, *there was no form or comeliness for which they should desire him. They hid their faces from him, and esteemed him not,* as was foretold by *Isaiab* the prophet.

That, therefore, which remains to be proved, is, that he confirmed this his testimony by many infallible miracles, which were wrought by himself and by his followers in his name. Let me begin with the miracles which he wrought himself, of which there was a very great number,

ber, and that of divers kinds; and these were not done in a corner, but in the face of the world, before multitudes, and that in the presence of, if not upon the persons of his greatest enemies. His first miracle after his shewing himself to *Israel*, was at a marriage-feast in *Cana of Galilee*, where he turned water, and a great quantity of it, into wine. After that he fed, more than once, a great multitude, even several thousands, with a few barley loaves and small fishes, which were so miraculously multiplied, that after they had eaten and were filled, his followers gathered up more fragments than there was at first in whole meat. He healed all manner of diseases, whether the diseased were present or absent; and this he did, as likewise his other miracles, with a word speaking. Some of those wonderful cures he did on the sabbath-day, for which the Pharisees (his inveterate enemies) did find fault with him, though they could not deny the matter of fact. He made the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the blind to see; concerning which the chief priests and elders had not only the attestation of by-standers, but the confession of the parties themselves, whom they curiously interrogated about the thing done, and his manner of doing it. He cleansed many lepers, and cast out many devils, which his enemies beholding could not deny, but blasphemed, and said, that he did it by diabolical aid, and that he cast out devils by *Beelzebub* the prince of devils. Some who were dead he restored to life again, particularly one that was carrying to his grave, and another that had lain some time in his grave, even till his friends said that he stunk. And this he did in sight of many Jews, who thereupon believed in him, having seen the miracle that he did; yea, the chief priests consulted about making away *Lazarus*, the person so miraculously raised, because that by reason of him, many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

The time limited for my discourse would fail me, should I but instance in the twentieth part of those many uncontrolled miracles which Jesus wrought in the space of three years or thereabout. And when his hour was come, in which he should be cut off, though *not for his own sins*

(as the Prophet *Daniel* had foretold) and should *make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in an everlasting righteousness*; even when he hung upon the cross, and was made sin, and a curse for us, then there was a quaking of the earth, a rending of the rocks; yea, the vail of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom, and for the space of three hours the sun was darkened without any eclipse; which was noted as a prodigious thing by the learned astronomers of those times; one of which is reported to have said, *That either the God of nature suffered, or the frame of the world shall suddenly be dissolved*. Yea, the centurion and his soldiers that attended, had such consternation at the things that happened, that they feared greatly, and said, *truly this was the son of God*. But above all, his rising again from the dead is most remarkable; therein, *he declared himself to be the son of God with power*. This fell out on the third day, as he himself had foretold: and if this one thing be cleared up, it is instead of a thousand demonstrations. Now, the greatest evidence that we can possibly have of a thing of this nature, is the testimony or attestation of others. This then is attested by a cloud of witnesses; they were not a few, but many, to whom he shewed himself alive, and that, many times after his passion, by many infallible proofs, *being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God*. There are but two things that can possibly be objected against their testimony. The first is, that those persons who were witnesses of his resurrection (as they called themselves) might possibly be deceived, and that they saw a fantastical, instead of a true, body. But this could not be, for they did not only see, but feel and handle him; yea, one of them put his finger into the holes in his hands and feet, and his hand into his side, such was his incredulity. They did not only feel and handle him, but they did also eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. If an argument drawn from all these senses will not hold, how then can we be sure that we ourselves, and all the persons we converse with, are not phantasms and mere apparitions? and how could the Jews be sure that it was Jesus whom they crucified, and secured in
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the sepulchre? In the same way that they were sure of the one, his followers were sure of the other. But if they were not deceived; yet, secondly, they might be deceivers: they might steal away the body of Jesus by night, and give it out that he was risen from the dead next morning. Two things shew the incredibility of such a thing: 1. It is not credible his followers could do it. The chief priests were aware that he had spoken beforehand of his rising the third day, and they foresaw that if this happened, the last error (as they counted it) would be worse than the first. Therefore they obtained leave of Pilate to make all sure, and some of them went themselves to see it done, and then they placed a strong and diligent watch to keep the sepulchre. But here it may be objected, that the watchmen fell asleep, and then his disciples came and stole him away. This indeed you Jews believe to this day, and we know your ancestors hired the watchmen to spread abroad this report. But then, why were not they punished for their carelessness and oscitancy? and if they were asleep how could they tell what the disciples did? and if they were awake, why did not they oppose them that did it? The keepers, for all their hire, did make another relation of what happened; how an angel descended with great splendor, whose countenance was like lightning, and rolled away the stone at the mouth of the sepulchre, which did so terrify them, as that they became as dead men. Is it credible that the disciples, if they stole away the body of their master, would stay to strip him, and lay the linnen cloths so decently by themselves? would they not rather have carried him away in his winding-sheet, especially when he was wound up in linnen with a mixture of myrrh and aloes, which hath a clammy and glutinous property? would they not have been afraid lest any of the keepers should awake, but stay and do so needless and difficult a work? but then, 2. as they could not do this if they would, so 'tis not credible that they would have done this if they could. Their writings, their conversations, shew them to be persons of great integrity and holiness; whereas, if they had done this thing, and imposed upon the world in this kind, they would have been a company,

pany, not only of very wicked persons, but of incarnate devils. *Mahomet's* villainy would not have compared with it. What! to belye God in such a manner, and to cry up faith in Jesus as risen again from the dead, when he is still under the power of death, and no otherwise risen than as they stole him out of the grave! this would have been hellish, unparallelled wickedness, and to be abhorred by all men of common honesty. But to put this out of question, there were other witnesses of his resurrection besides his immediate disciples. He was seen in *Galilee* of above five hundred persons at once; many of whom lived a long while after to witness what they had seen: and had his disciples and others conspired together so foully to belye God and their own consciences, we may imagine it must have been for some advantage to themselves; but contrary-wise, they knew that to profess Christ and the christian religion, was to bring upon themselves and theirs the greatest odium and persecution.

Yea, God himself would have abhorred such miscreants; but on the contrary, we find they are approved of God, and that by many miraculous signs and wonders which he did by them, and by that abundant measure of his spirit which he poured out in extraordinary gifts and graces upon them. And this would have led me to the last term in my assumption, that Jesus his testimony of himself was confirmed, not only by his own miracles, but also by the miracles that his followers did in his name. For the truth is, they did as great miracles in the name of Jesus, as ever he did in his own person. They cured all manner of infirmities, and that not leisurely by the application of medicines; but suddenly and miraculously by a word speaking. The very shadow of *Peter*, one of his disciples, healed the sick as they lay in their beds or couches in the streets. A certain man aged forty years and upward, that had been lame from his mother's womb, was carried and laid daily at the gate of the temple, which was called beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; to him this *Peter* said, *Silver and gold I have none, but such as I have I give thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk: and he took him by the right hand, and lift him*

him up, and immediately his feet and ancles received strength, and he entered into the temple, walking and leaping, and praising God. This was manifest to all them that dwelt in Jerusalem, and acknowledged to be a notable miracle by the rulers of the people, and the elders of Israel. One *Dorcas* that was dead, he restored to life with a word speaking, which was known to all the inhabitants of *Joppa*, which occasioned the conversion of that town to the christian religion. I might instance in the miracles that were wrought by other disciples and followers of *Jesus*. Let me conclude with a word or two concerning *Paul*, who was once mad against the christians, and did zealously persecute them in every city. He was miraculously converted by *Jesus Christ's* appearing to him in the way as he went about this work to *Damascus*; a great light shone round about him, which his companions saw as well as himself, and a voice spake to him, saying, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.* He was struck blind for many days: But after some time the eyes of his body and mind both, being enlightened, he preached that faith which before he persecuted; and which is to our purpose, many signal and special miracles were done by his hands; so that from his body were brought to the sick, handkerchiefs, or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them. But I forbear any further naming of these particulars; and having thus clearly and fully proved the premises, I hope you will yield the conclusion, which is, that *Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah.*"

After a short pause, L's friend, the Rabbi, broke silence, and spake as followeth: Sir, I desire you would have the like patience in hearing my answer, as I have had in hearing your argument. The question before us is of the greatest consideration, both with us Jews, and you christians; and you may imagine that before now, I have debated it both with myself and others. I remember some years ago in *Portugal* I was assaulted with this very argument, proving *Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah*, by his working of miracles and finding that it was much urged by the christians, I spent some time in

studying that point, and formed an answer to this argument in writing, and that writing I brought with me ; which I the rather did, because my friend told me, this was the subject to be argued, and I did suppose you might haply attempt the proving of it by this very medium : and because I have a bad memory, and speak no good English, I shall beg leave to make use of my papers." So having pulled a little manuscript out of his pocket, and turned over a few leaves, he made a fold at the place he sought, and laid it by him a while, and thus proceeded ; " As to that, Sir, which you called your proposition, I shall offer nothing in contradiction to it, it seems to be founded on the greatest reason ; nor will any of ours gainsay those two positions you mentioned. 1st, That God only can work real miracles. 2dly, That he will not, as I remember you well expressed it, set his seal to a lie. *Jehovah* is a God of truth and righteousness.

But, Sir, as to that which you called your assumption, it doth not in our opinion carry the like evidence and demonstration with it. For, to be plain with you, it doth not appear to us, though *Jesus of Nazareth*, did testify he was the *Messiah*, that he confirmed that testimony by such infallible miracles, either of his own or his followers, nor hath any thing been urged by you for the manifesting thereof, but what you have found in your own books, which you cannot but know are questioned by us as to their authority and verity. And surely had our fathers and the chief priests of our nation, seen any such miracles done by *Jesus of Nazareth*, as your records do mention, they were men of that religion and learning, that they would not have so evilly intreated him, but would have paid him more respect and veneration. We believe therefore, as our ancestors have believed before us, that they were some of them forgeries and feigned miracles, and that others of them (pardon the world) were diabolical achievements. And we are the more confirmed in this belief, because your later records and chronicles do tell us of multitudes of miracles, which were wrought, as they say, by men and women of your religion, which seems to us to be very fabulous, yea ridiculous. Yet these

these are received amongst you likewise, as certain and and infallible, and have the approbation of the church and of the high priest, whom you call the *Pope*, and the sanhedrim of cardinals. And some of these do vie with the miracles of Jesus and his disciples, and seem to be much of the same sort or kind. Let me name a few of many, and they are such as I have taken out of great authors, and licensed or allowed records. And pardon me, if I do not cite the author and places where they are chronicled; if you desire it, I can produce my vouchers for every story, and those such as are authentick." Then taking up his little book, and putting on a pair of spectacles, he read as followeth: "Your books, said he, do first make mention of Jesus his miraculous conception, before they speak of his, and his followers, miraculous actions. This I have heard urged by others, though it was omitted by you, how he was conceived of the holy spirit, and then born of a virgin without the knowledge of man. A like miracle is recorded in one of your church-histories, published not long since with allowance; how *St. Kentigern's* mother begged of Jesus, that she might imitate his virgin-mother in the conception and birth of a child: accordingly within a little time she finds herself with child, but often protests she never knew any man. By the law of that country where she lived, she must be cast headlong from the top of a high mountain. She weeps and prays, but the executioner does his work; down she falls, but is so far from being killed or dashed in pieces, that she was not bruised or hurt. Then she is carried on shipboard many miles into the sea, and there turned out into a small boat of leather, destitute of all human help; yet with great speed and safety she arrived at a far distant port; and landing, she is delivered of that admirable saint, and miraculously conceived son, *Saint Kentigern*.

As to miraculous actions, the fore-mentioned book, and others of equal or greater authority, will afford plenty, that do not only compare with, but exceed the miracles of Jesus and his disciples. As for instance, your records speak of Jesus his fasting forty days; and I can shew you where it is recorded of *St. Patrick*, that he fast-

ed a whole Lent (which, I think with you is forty days) without any human sustenance ; where one *St. Ardan* is said to fast full fifty days, and to grow fatter upon it.

And whereas it is said, that *Jesus* fed five thousand persons with five loaves and two small fishes ; *St. Patrick* is said to have fed fourteen thousand with one cow, two stags, and two wild boars ; and it was talked how next day the cow was alive again.

And as for *Jesus* his turning water into wine, it is not so much as is commonly affirmed of your priests, how by repeating three or four words, they can turn wine into blood, and bread into flesh, and that the flesh and blood of *Jesus* himself ; though you affirm he is ascended into heaven, and shall there remain till his second coming. And it is recorded of one *Odo* an archbishop of *Canterbury*, that when some of his clergy did doubt of such transmutation or transubstantiation, that he prayed with tears while he was at mass, that God would convince them by a sign ; and the body of *Jesus* which he held in his hands (that is the bread) began to pour forth blood into the chalice ; which they perceiving, desired the prelate to pray that the blood might be changed again, lest vengeance should fall upon them for their incredulity ; he doth so, and it became wine.

Again, whereas your records speak how *Jesus* and his disciples did heal all manner of diseases, whether the diseased were present or absent, and that with a word speaking : the like is also recorded of some of his modern followers. Take for instance *St. David*, a great light of the church, as he is called : he invited *St. Kined* to come to his synod ; *St. Kined* excused himself, because he was lame and crooked, unfit for such holy company, and unable for so great a journey : Whereupon *St. David* prays him strait and sound. But the other still delayed his coming ; upon which, *St. David* unprays his former prayer, and he becomes lame and crooked again. *St. Bernard* had great success, as appears in your histories this way, for he cured one in *Spain* of a sore disease whilst he was in *France* ; he cured one of a dropsy, by putting his own girdle about him ; another of the head-ach, by sending him his cap to wear ; another that
lay

lay dying, he restored by sending him his coat ; with many more of the like kind.

As for casting out of devils, nothing is more ordinary than for your priests to do that feat by their exorcisms ; your holy water with the sign of the cross, is said to be frequently successful in this work. And I find in one of your histories, how a woman was dispossessed of seven devils at *Lauretto*, by calling on the Virgin *Mary* for help : and when four were cast out, the other three called *Heroth*, *Horribilis*, and *Arcto*, with much difficulty were removed ; one cries out, *Mary, Mary, thou art too cruel against us* ; another howled out lamentably, and said, *Mary, thou art too powerful in this place, where thou dost force us out of our possession against our will*. And the priest, who by *Mary's* aid did this miracle, made him tell what place that was : who answered, it was the virgin's bed-chamber, wherein, after the angel *Gabriel's* message, she conceived God ; which was, as other histories speak, brought thither by a miracle. Nay, some of your great saints have contended with the devil, and worsted him ; as *St. Dunstan*, who catch'd him by the nose with a pair of hot tongs, and plucked him so hard, that the devil was glad to shift from him, by breaking down a wall, crying out, it did so smart, once and again, oh ! what hath this baldpate done ?

As for raising the dead, this also hath been frequently practised. *St. Francis* makes one die that answered his disciples roughly when they would have borrowed his cart, and afterwards raised him up again, and restored him to life. A man and his son going a pilgrimage to *St. James* at *Compostella*, light upon a wicked host, that first makes them drunk, and then puts two silver cups into their wallets ; they are pursued, and being taken and tried, the son was hanged, the father goes on his pilgrimage, and returned thirty-six days after, to the body of his son still hanging ; he maketh grievous lamentations, till by and by the hanged son began to comfort him, saying, Most dear father, weep not, but rejoice, for I was never better in all my life ; *St. James* supports and comforts me with heavenly sweetness : The father overjoyed, makes known the business ; the people flock to-

gether, the man is taken down, and the host hanged up in his room.

I could shew you where *St. David* is said to have raised a boy from the dead, who afterwards waited upon him. *St. Patrick* to have raised one from the dead that was almost devoured by hogs. And *St. Alban* being to be martyr'd, people thronged to see his martyrdom, and crouding very hard by a deep river, many fell in and were drowned: the Saint perceiving it, prays that all might see his passion; and to that purpose the waters may be dried up: it was done accordingly, and those that were drowned before, are now found safe at the bottom of the river.

Again, whereas it is recorded, that Jesus raised himself from the dead: I can turn you to records in great credit with you, where some of your eminent Saints are reported to have done things little inferior thereunto. *St. Dennis* the patron of *France*, when his head was cut off, carried that head of his two miles in his hands. *St. Winifred* vowing virginity, was wooed by a king's son: to make her escape, she pretends to dress her (for he found her much unready) and to return again; but out of a back door she goes, and makes towards the church: on the side of a hill she is overtaken by her suitor, whose love was turned into rage; and she continuing in her obstinacy, he cut off her head, and there rose up a well, which still bears her name: the head tumbles down into the church amongst the people. *St. Benno* takes it up, seeks the murderer, and finds him wiping his bloody sword upon the grass; he pronounceth his curse against him, whereupon he falls down dead. Saint *Benno* often kissing the head, joins it to the body, covers it with his mantle, and goes to the altar to say mass; that done, to the body he returns and begins a sermon, and prays for the virgin, whereto the people say *Amen*: Presently the virgin riseth up, as if it were from sleep, wipes her face from dust and sweat, and goes to the church to give thanks: only where the section was made, there was a circle like a white thread all her life. *St. Clare*, a noble Englishman, to avoid marrying a noble and beautiful

tiful virgin, runs away to *France*; there a lady falls in love with him; to escape her, he leaves the monastery he was in; this turns her kindness into fury; she sends two murderers, who cut off his head; he riseth straight, and with his hands takes up his head, carries it unto a fountain, into which he cast it; thence he takes it again, and carries it into the oratory of his cell, and thence went forward to a little village near the river *Epta*; where, for ought appears, he ended his procession. My allotted time will not suffer me to proceed, though I have collected some scores of these miracles; and indeed there is great plenty of them to be had. In one word, to conclude, the miracles of these modern saints, exceed the miracles of Jesus or his immediate followers; for they are recorded to have delivered souls out of hell-torments, which Jesus himself did never pretend to do. *Gregory* the great (one of your chief priests) wept so long for *Trajan* the emperor, that he obtained deliverance of his soul from hell, although we read, he was charged to ask no more so great a favour for any, at least, that died unbaptized. So *St. Dunstan* delivered king *Edwin's* soul from infernal torments; and when the devils quarrelled with him about it, he stopped their mouths by asking them what reason they had to find fault with it, if Christ and he thought good to pardon him? *St. Nicholas* also delivered his own brother's soul from hell; though it cost him fifteen days and nights praying and weeping, as *St. Anthony* reports. Now, Sir, I think I am even with you in point of miracles, and must tell you, that we Jews (however we are charged with infidelity) are not such infidels, or ideots rather, to believe a reality in any of these stories. Surely the almighty power would not trifle thus with mortals. These are therefore either ar-rant forgeries, or else devilish achievements; and we cannot but think the same of the miracles of Christ and his disciples, because the one are recorded and received by you as well as the other: and therefore they are no proof that the testimony of Jesus was divine, or that he is the Messiah."

Father

Father S. sat all this while (as I could perceive) very uneasily; and when the *Rabbi* had ended, he never looked up, nor made one word of reply; but his countenance, as well as his silence, did argue him full of confusion and disturbance in his mind. I looked upon Mr. B. and shook my head; I feared occasion might be given these Jews to triumph, if the conference ended thus; and that they would be hardened themselves, and would also harden others in their unbelief and prejudice against the christian faith; wherefore I hoped that Mr. B. would take up the argument, and confute the *Rabbi's* cavils; nor was I disappointed, for presently he rose up, and drew nearer the table, and said, "Sirs, you have greatly obliged me, in permitting me to be present hitherto in the capacity of an hearer; and you will further oblige me, if you will permit me (now there has been so long a silence) to interpose a little as a speaker. As my discourse is not premeditated, so it shall not be prolix. The argument this worthy person hath urged to prove, that Jesus (our Lord and Saviour) is the Christ, is of greater weight than to be so easily blown away: as you have already granted his major, so I question not but you will also grant his minor proposition, when I shall make it manifest, that there is a vast difference, or disproportion, between the pretended miracles that you have gleaned out of some later writings, and the real miracles that were done by Jesus, our Lord, and his immediate followers, as they are recorded in the scripture. As for the former, falsehood and forgery are engraven upon them in capital letters.

This will appear, if you consider how the report of these miracles comes not forth till many years after they are done; or there is no mention of a competent number of credible persons that were witnesses of the doing of them. Besides, the greatest number of christians either never heard, or never approved, of any such miracles; yea, there is nothing they have more disowned, both by word and writing, than the legends of such fabulous wonders; they have always accounted them as a subtle device of Satan, the old serpent, to disparage the christian religion, and the wicked policy of a certain sect amongst them to uphold an antichristian faction. Let it not stumble

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ble you that I speak of sects and factions amongst us christians ; they are found in all religions ; they are with you Jews, and they were, of old, with your fathers, who were divided, and crumbled, into sects and parties, such as the *Pharisees, Sadduces, Essenes, Herodians*, and the like : with us christians, there is a great sect or faction of those who are commonly called *Papists*, or *Roman Catholics*, who have made the greatest schism, or rent, that ever was in the christian religion ; who anathematize and curse all those that are not of their faction or communion ; and although they are numerous, and pretend to be the catholick church, and do fill *Spain* and *Portugal*, and some other countries, with which, it may be, you have been most conversant ; yet they are but few, comparatively, that is, in comparison of other christians that are in the western and eastern parts of the world ; as the protestants of other kingdoms and commonwealths ; the *Muscovites*, the *Greeks*, the *Abassines*, the *Armenians*, the *Coptites*, the *Circassians*, the *Mengrelians*, the *Georgians*, and the like. 'Tis, then, with this popish sect only that these fictitious miracles are found ; the generality of christians do openly declare that miracles are long since ceased ; nor was there any need of their continuance in the church, the christian faith being, already, not only sufficiently, but abundantly, confirmed by the miracles, the infallible miracles of our Saviour, and the primitive christians ; who shewed their patent, or commission, under the broad-seal of heaven, to the conviction, and utter silencing, of their most obstinate enemies, both Jews and Gentiles. You must know that *Moses* confirmed the law, and the ordinances thereof, by miracles first wrought in *Egypt*, and afterwards on mount *Sinai*, and in the wilderness ; but when your fathers were convinced of *Moses* his authority, and were once settled in the land of *Canaan*, then those miracles ceased. So the gospel, and the ordinances thereof, were at first confirmed by the uncontrolled miracles of our Saviour and the primitive christians ; (as indeed it was meet that those who pretended a new revelation from God, should confirm it with a divine attestation) but since the christian religion is now diffused both far and near, for the same reason

son all miracles are at an end: as men water orchards at the first planting of them; but when the trees are well rooted, they do so no more. But amongst these schismatical papists, miracles are still pretended, who care not what wrong they do to the christian religion, or the common cause of christianity, so they increase their own party. By means hereof, they delude the more ignorant and credulous sort of people, of whose souls their priests make great merchandize. In King *Henry* the VIIIth's time, by the diligence of the Lord *Cromwell*, one of the chief ministers of state, many of the abominable cheats and forgeries of the Papists, in this kind, were made manifest throughout this nation, which was one great cause of the reformation that followed. And it is no slight evidence of the verity and divine authority of the scriptures of the New Testament, that this was foretold therein some hundreds of years before it came to pass; for so it is there recorded, that there should be a great defection or apostasy in the christian church, which also should be headed by the Bishop of *Rome*; and though he be not named, yet any one, with half an eye, may perceive he is intended; never did glove better fit a hand, nor shoe a foot, than the character the scripture gives of the head of that apostasy, doth agree to the *Romish* Pope: and concerning him it says expressly, that his coming should be after the working of Satan with power and signs, and lying wonders: in the Greek it is ΤΕΡΑΣΙ ΠΣΕΥΔΟΥΣ, with wonders of a lie, an usual *Hebraism*, as you understand, to note the notorious falshood of his wonders. And, in another place, it speaks of a beast (meaning the same person,) whom the world should wonder after, and worship too, and that for this reason, because he doth great wonders in the sight of men. This may suffice for these lying wonders, with their impudent authors.

But as for the miracles of our Saviour and his immediate followers, they are of another nature, and wear upon themselves marks of infallibility; they are recorded in the age and places, when and where they were wrought; they were done (as this worthy person well observed) not in a corner, but in the face of the world, before multitudes of witnesses, and these, persons of known credit
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and integrity. Infomuch, that your ancestors the Jews, that lived in those days, and enquired diligently into those things, did never once deny the matter of fact, that such miracles were indeed done ; but they said they were done by diabolical assistance. And others of them have said, that Jesus had found out the right pronounciation of that ineffable name, the *Nomen Tetragrammaton* ; and that it was sewed in his thigh, and that by the power thereof he did all his miracles. How ridiculous are such evasions ? It seems evident enough, that many of the pharisees and rabbins themselves, in those days, lay under this conviction, that Jesus came from God, and was the Christ, and professed too their faith in him ; tho' the most of them did it secretly for fear of the Jews, who had agreed, that if any did confess that he was Christ, they should be put out of the synagogue. *Josephus*, a man of learning, who lived near those times, and who was a Jew by nation and religion, in the eighteenth book of his antiquities, doth publish this passage to the world : *that in the time of Tiberius Cæsar, there was one Jesus, a wise man ; (if, says he, it be lawful to call him a man) for he was the performer of divers miraculous works, and the instructor of those who willingly entertained the truth. This was Christ, who being accused by the princes of our nation before Pilate, and afterwards condemned to the cross, yet did not his followers forbear to love him for the ignominy of his death ; for he appeared unto them the third day after, as the divine prophet had before testified of the same, and divers other wonderful things of him.*

Let me desire you to use your reason. Do but think with yourself, if the miracles I am speaking of had been forged or feigned, how easy a matter had it been for the Jews that lived in those times, to have discovered and disproved the fraud and falshood thereof. Put the case, there should at this instant go abroad a report of one in *London*, that did great miracles, and that very frequently ; that cured the blind, the lame, the deaf, the dumb, the diseased of all sorts, that came or were brought to him, with a word speaking ; that he cast out devils, and raised the dead ; and that his followers did the like, and
that

that frequently in all parts of the land ; and that these things were done in the presence of thousands, of throngs and multitudes of people. I pray you judge if it were not the easiest matter in the world to disprove this if it were false and feigned ; and whether it were possible that whole cities and countries should believe it, and seal their belief thereof with their blood ; nay, consider whether the easiness and certainty of disproving this report, were not like to bring them all under the greatest scorn and contempt imaginable, that should publish it. You see the case is parallel, and I need not stay to apply it. It is strange to observe, that the Jews of those times, whose hearts were ready to burst, with envy and malice, at the success of the Gospel, never, publicly, objected the forging or feigning of those miracles by which it was confirmed. Yea, it is farther observable, that the heathens themselves, and the great ones amongst them too, did openly assent to the reality thereof. We find it in true records, how *Tiberius* himself, upon a letter from *Pilate* concerning Jesus, of the miracles he wrought, and of the manner of his death and resurrection, did move in the senate of *Rome*, that he might be admitted amongst their gods ; and though they refused the motion, because, as some say, it was not first moved by themselves ; or as others say, because if they received him, they must renounce their other gods ; yet the emperor persisted in his opinion of Jesus, and gave the christians great liberty all his days.

Yea, the *Turks* acknowledge Jesus our Saviour to be sent of God, and that he confirmed his mission by miracles, and upbraided the Jews for not believing God by his prophet Jesus ; and *Mahomet* threatened judgment against them for it in his *Alcoran*, saying, that Jesus Christ was the word and power of God, sent to convince the world by miracles ; that he was born of a virgin, conceived without an earthly father, by divine inspiration ; that he cured all manner of diseases, and raised the dead to life again ; that he was taken at length into heaven, and shall come again : thus much of our faith is confessed by those infidels. I could go forward, but I see the time is well nigh expired that you allowed for this conference,

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and, therefore, I shall not be guilty of a farther absurdity; but I beg your pardon for that I have already committed, by an unrequested interposing in your serious debate. And, for a close, I must tell you, Sir, that you must yield the conclusion in this gentleman's argument, or else deny his major proposition, which yet you say is founded on the greatest reason; or else you must fly to the evasion of your fathers, which is, *That Jesus our Lord did indeed work miracles, but it was by the power of the devil.* And to say this, pardon the expression, is no less than blasphemy: it is, in effect, to say, *That the devil is God*; and to ascribe the attributes and prerogative of God unto him. For if Satan can do such miracles without controul, to persuade poor mortals to an entertainment of error, and to delude the world, who have no sufficient means (as was said before) to discover the delusion; then it plainly follows, *That he is a God in power, and the almighty governor of the world*; or, at least, *That God hath so little mercy or justice, or care of mankind, as to give them to the power of the devil to be remedilessly deluded by him*: and he that will believe this rather than the christian faith, deserves to perish in his blasphemy and infidelity. I have done when I have made this one request to you, that you will be pleased to favour me with such another meeting; and I shall hope, by the assistance of that Spirit which proceeds from the Father and the Son, which three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory; I say, by his assistance, and by other arguments, and by those taken from the writings of *Moses* and the prophets, and some of your own rabbinical authors, clearly and convincingly to demonstrate, *That Jesus is the Messiah*; yea, the only begotten Son of God, and the Saviour of the world."

L. the Jew was much affected (as I did perceive) with Mr. B's close and warm discourse; (and indeed what with the matter, and his manner of delivering it, I think we were all affected more or less;) and turned to his friend, and desired him by all means to accept of this gentleman's motion, and appoint another meeting.

The Rabbi made a low bow to Mr. B. and said, "Sir, I heartily thank you for your plain and ingenuous dis-

course ; and I willingly acknowledge that I have received more information from it, than from any person, or author, that ever I yet conversed with ; yea, what if I should say, within a little you have persuaded me to be a christian. I must not conceal that it hath been the opinion of some of our learned men, that the Messias is come, and that for our sins he lies concealed. I have been often staggered in myself when I have thought of this matter. I dare not shut my eyes against clear light, but open them as wide as I can. Therefore, Sir, on this day fortnight at the same hour I shall gladly meet you, and if it may be, I am content that this house, in which we now are, should be the place ; only I beg leave to bring one or two of my brethren with me ; and yet I desire also that we may be private, and that not above the number of three, or four, at most, be present besides ourselves." I told them my house was at their service, and that I was rejoiced to see so good an effect of the past conference ; I called for a bottle of wine ; they drank in a friendly manner to one another ; so L. and his friend took their leave.

When they were gone, Father S. applied himself to Mr. B. and thanked him for his seasonable interposition, and desired his farther acquaintance. " I must, said he, confess to you, that I am one of those that you call *Roman Catholics* ; but I was not aware that our church, by the miracles she approves of, and allows to be wrought in her, did give such a stab to the christian faith, as I now find it doth. I confess I have been long of opinion that those miracles of our saints, that are so much magnified amongst us, are most of them false and fabulous. And I remember that I have read in *Ludovicus Vives*, a learned writer of our own, how he calls the Golden Legend, a history unworthy of the saints, and that the author had a brazen face. Yea, he says expressly, that the lives of the saints are corrupted with abundance of lies, and that the authors did set down, not what the saints did, but what themselves would have had them done."

Mr. B. understanding that Father S. was a *Roman Catholic*, desired his pardon that he had spoke so keenly against the church and pope of *Rome* ; adding, that he saw a necessity of it, for the undeceiving of the Jew.

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“ And, Sir, said he, give me leave to tell you, that your church, by her lying wonders, and forged miracles, hath greatly diserved and disparaged the faith of Christ, and gone about to invalidate the chiefeſt argument, as you yourſelf acknowledged, for the confirmation of it. And let me add, that the Jews are farther prejudiced againſt chriſtianity by the Papiſts, amongſt whom they moſtly converſe, eſpecially in the weſtern parts of the world, and that is by your adoration of images, the hoſt, the croſs, and the relicks of the ſaints ; for they are great zealots in the ſecond commandment, and utter enemies to all idolatry. To which may be added, your debarring the general uſe of the New Teſtament, which is the probable means for obtaining the knowledge of Chriſt, and the chriſtian religion.”

Father S. replied, that though he was a *Roman Catholic*, yet withal he was a chriſtian ; and “ I think, ſaid he, it is high time for me, and all chriſtians beſides, to think of renouncing communion with that church whoſe principles and practices ſhall encourage men to continue Jews and infidels ; and as the Jew ſaid, *That as within a little he was perſuaded to be a chriſtian*, ſo could he ſay, *That within a little he was perſuaded to be a proteſtant*. Upon this they took leave of one another, promiſing to meet again at the time beforementioned.

Sir, I judged this narrative would not be unacceptable to you. If any thing occurs in the next meeting that is worth your notice, it ſhall be readily communicated by

Yours in many Obligations,

N. H.

A
DISPUTATION
BETWEEN
A PROTESTANT and a JEW, &c.

Kind Sir,

Think myself obliged, partly by mine own
I promise, and partly by your importunity, to
give you some account of the second conference at my house, which was managed by
Mr. B. and Rabbi J. and I wish you may
read it with the same satisfaction that I heard it.

After the company met (which was now a little augmented by consent) and all were seated and composed; Mr. B. began and applied himself particularly to Rabbi J. and said, " Sir, you know the business that we are come hither about; that is to debate, whether *Jesus of Nazareth* be the promised *Messias*? This was demonstrated the last meeting by this worthy person (pointing to father S.) by a convincing argument, which was drawn from the many infallible miracles which were wrought by himself in the days of his flesh, and by his followers afterwards in his name; these did amply testify that he came from God, and that the testimony he gave of himself was true, else God (as was then said) would never have set his own seal to it. It is indeed the greatest confirmation of any testimony that poor mortals, who cannot discern the essence and being of God, are capable of receiving. I do not therefore decline this argument, because of its insufficiency to prove that matter in question,

on, or because any thing hath been, or can be, offered to evade or invalidate the force of it. But to the end you may see our faith doth not hang only upon this hinge, I shall advance another argument to prove that *Jesus of aza-reth* (in whom we christians believe) is the promised Messias. Besides, then, the testimony of miracles, we have the testimony of the scriptures to this truth, and I remember our Lord himself doth appeal to both these testimonies; he says, *The works he did in his Father's name did bear witness of him*; and he bid the Jews to *search the scriptures, for they are they which testify of him*. And we find in the acts of his apostles, that one *Apollos* did mightily convince the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

To this work then I shall immediately apply myself; and as I remember, it is that which I promised, and I suppose you expect."

Rabbi J. assented and said, "Yes, that was the proof they now expected; only he hoped that by the scriptures he meant those that the christians call the scriptures of the Old Testament, to wit, the writings of *Moses* and the prophets, and the hagiographa. Mr. B. replied that he intended no other; for he was sensible the Jews would object against any citation out of the scriptures of the New Testament; tho' he added, he could easily manifest (if that were now his business) that there lay no exceptions against them but what were of equal force against the writings of *Moses* and all the prophets; but that he should confine himself to those scriptures which, by the unanimous consent both of Jews and christians, were of divine authority. And from these (said he) I shall make good these two grand assertions, 1. That the promised Messias is long since come. And, 2. That *Jesus of Nazareth* is he. And if I prove these two points, I hope you will give us the right hand of fellowship, and become members of the christian church."

Rabbi J. answered, that if those two points were clearly and convincingly proved, he would presently renounce Judaism, and be baptized and become a professor of the christian faith. He only requested that it might not be interpreted an interruption, if, as particular places

were cited and urged, he made his objections (if he had any) because he was old and of weak memory, and many things might slip from him, if he deferred the mention of them till the end of a long discourse. Mr. B. approved of his motion, and, therefore, told him he would, purposely, make a pause, now and then, to wait if any thing might be objected or opposed to what he delivered.

Then taking a *Hebrew* bible out of his pocket, he laid it before him, and thus proceeded :

Mr. B. “ The first thing I propose to prove, is this, *That the promised Messias is already, yea, long since come.* For the evincing of this assertion, I might urge many places out of *Moses* and the prophets ; but I shall take up only three, which are most considerable.

The first is in the book which we call *Genesis*, in the *Hebrew*, *Beresith* ; you will find it in chap. xlix. 8, 10. there. *Jacob* is giving his sons his last benediction ; and when he comes to *Judah*, he prophesies of him, *That his brethren should praise him ; that his hands should be in the neck of his enemies ; that his father's children should bow down before him :* and farther, which is the passage I aim at, he adds, *That the scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.* I shall first explain these words, and then form my argument from them. By *Judah* here, is not meant the person but the tribe of *Judah*. Nothing here spoken of *Judah* was in any measure fulfilled in his person, he lived, and died, in *Egypt* without pre-eminence among his brethren ; and if you look a little higher, you will find the things foretold by *Jacob*, were such as concerned not the persons of his sons, but their posterity, in the last days. By *scepter* and *lawgiver* are meant the ruling and legislative power that, in process of time, did settle and center in that tribe of *Judah* ; it began in *David*, who was of that tribe, and continued for some centuries of years, though not without alterations and intermissions : though there was some variety in the form of government ; sometimes it was monarchical, and sometimes aristocratical, yet still the law and polity amongst them were the same. By

Shiloh

Shiloh is meant the Messiah, or the promised seed, the seed of the woman; this might be proved from the signification of the word, as also from the following words; *to him shall the gathering of the people be*; or, as some read it, *to him shall the obedience of the nations be*. Now to whom can this be applied but the Messiah, unto whom it is elsewhere promised the nations shall seek? The nations of the earth were to be blessed in him, and the nations of the earth were to be gathered to him. Of this opinion also were all your ancient masters. Nothing is of greater authority with you Jews, than your Targums. Ben Uzziel renders it, *Until the time wherein the King Messiah shall come*; and Onkelos to this purpose, *Until the Messiah shall come, whose is the kingdom*; and in that of Jerusalem, your learned doctors thus render, or rather paraphrase, upon this prophecy; *Kings shall not cease from the house of Judah, nor doctors that teach the law, from his childrens children, until the time that the King Messiah do come, whose the kingdom is, and all the nations of the earth shall be subject to him*. From the words thus explained, I draw this argument: if the scepter and lawgiver be departed from Judah, then is the Messiah already come; but the scepter and lawgiver are departed from Judah, therefore is the Messiah already come: the major proposition is affirmed in the text; the minor can't be denied by you Jews yourselves. You can't but acknowledge, that for above one thousand seven hundred years, there hath been no such thing as a tribe of Judah in any national or political constitution. 'Tis evident, beyond all contradiction, that your whole nation hath been scattered over the face of the earth, and have led a precarious life, under foreign and strange princes, and have had, for many generations, no law, government or authority of your own amongst yourselves. This is not only confest, but lamented, by some of your most learned Rabbi's. *Kimchi* on *Hosea* thus writes, *These are the days of our captivity, wherein we have neither king nor prince of Israel; but we are in the power of the Gentiles, and under the power of their kings and princes*. And the great *Abarbinel* on *Isaiab*, tells us, *That 'tis a great part of their misery, in their captivity,*
that

that they have neither kingdom nor rule, nor scepter of judgment ; as if he should have said, scepter and lawgiver are departed.

The precise time of the departure of all rule and authority from *Judah*, is a little disputed ; some say it was in the days of *Herod*, an *Idumean*, who rooted out the *Maccabees* and *Sanhedrim*, whereupon the Jews put on sackcloth, and shaved their heads, and lamenting, said, *Wo unto us, because the scepter is departed from Judah, and the lawgiver from between his feet.* Others say, it was at that time, when their country, city, and temple were destroyed by *Vespasian* and *Titus* ; and that till then there remained some footsteps of rule and authority amongst them. I am not concerned at present in this dispute ; 'tis enough to prove what I affirm, that it is long since ceased and departed : for that being absolutely and irrecoverably gone, if there be any truth or certainty in this text, then *Shiloh* or the *Messiah* is come, which was the thing to be proved.

Rab. J. The word (*Shebet*) which you render a scepter, doth also signify a rod ; and the meaning of the place may be this, that the rod of affliction shall be upon the back of *Judah*, till the coming of the *Messiah*.

Mr. B. I will not deny, but that *Shebet* doth properly signify a rod or staff ; but its metaphorical and most usual signification is a scepter or ensign of rule and government, and so it must necessarily be read and rendered in other places : as in *Psal. xlv. The scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter.* And in *Numb. xxiv. There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall arise out of Israel.* And that the word must be thus read and rendered in the prophecy before us, is plain ; because it is joined with *Mechoeck*, a law-giver, or one that hath authority to write, or prescribe laws to be observed ; this, then, is here foretold, that there shall be a continuance of a sovereign power in the tribe of *Judah*, when the kingly government shall cease, till the coming of *Christ*, in the great *Sanhedrim* and in other governors. And 'tis with respect to this prophecy that *God*, in *Psal. lx*, and in *Psal. cviii*, calls *Judah* his lawgiver ; and in *1 Chron. xxviii. 4.* 'tis said, he had chosen *Judah* to be his ruler.

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And that it can't be meant of a rod of affliction or correction, is evident; because a long while after this prophecy, especially in the reigns of *David* and *Solomon*, the tribe of *Judah* was in a flourishing and prosperous condition.

Rab. J. But if this be meant of the coming of Christ, then he was exhibited long before you yourselves say he was born; for the scepter departed from *Judah* in the *Babylonish* captivity, and afterwards in the days of the *Assamonei* or the *Maccabees*.

Mr. B. The scepter was not departed from *Judah* in the *Babylonish* captivity, but only suppressed for a season; and God by his prophets did promise the restoring of it after seventy years, and accordingly it was actually restored: for after the captivity, the Jews were governed by dukes, who were of the tribe of *Judah*, as *Zerubbabel* and his posterity, to whom were adjoined scribes, as *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, &c. And as for the *Maccabees*, they were of the mother's side from *Judah*, and with them were joined the *Sanhedrim*, consisting of seventy-two elders, most of the tribe of *Judah*, and family of *David*; who continued in the government of that people, till *Herod the Ascalonite*, an *Idumean* and a stranger, did root them all out. These things are fully testified by *Josephus*, an approved historian, and other authentic records.

R. J. Well sir, you may proceed.

Mr. B. The second testimony which proves the Messiah to be long since come, is taken out of the prophecy of *Daniel*. You will find in *Chap. ix. 24, 25, 26, 27.* *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in an everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy. Know therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks, the streets shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off,*
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but not for himself; and the people of the prince that shall come, shall destroy the city, and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the-sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

I intend not a large explication of this prophecy; this I desire may be attended to, that the true Messiah promised unto the fathers, is here spoken of. That there is a time limited for his coming, and that this time is long since past and gone.

That the true Messiah is here spoken of, is evident: he is twice called by that very name; and, indeed, the name of the Messiah, as appropriated unto the promised seed, is taken from this place or prophecy alone: for it is no where used of him absolutely but here. And the addition of the word *Nagid*, the prince, or the supreme ruler, doth make it yet more evident; for this word in sundry other places, is peculiarly applied to the Messiah. See *Isa. iv. 4. I have given him* (to wit, the Christ) *to be the Nagid, a leader or a prince unto the people.* A learned critick hath well observed, that these words, *Messiah Nagid*, that is, Messiah the Prince, are written in such *Hebrew*, as must needs argue it a proper name, and as is not to be found again in all the Bible.

To which may be added, the person here spoken of, is not only called Messiah, and Messiah the Prince, but he is also called the Most holy, or the Holy of holies; the most holy place in the tabernacle and temple was so called, but that can't be here intended. The holy place in the second temple was never anointed; for it was not lawful for them to make the holy oil: and besides, that was burnt with fire and utterly destroyed about the expiration of these weeks. It is therefore the person, that the holy place typifies, that is here spoken of. The name of the type is given to the antitype; he is the Most holy that was anointed: that is, he was made a Messiah. And
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a great *Rabbi* of your own doth thus expound it; this Holy of holies is the Messiah, who is anointed or sanctified from amongst the sons of *David*.

And for a further confirmation of this, do but consider what work is here assigned to be done by this person, and you must conclude it is the Messiah that is here intended. Who, but he, could finish or take away transgression, and make an end of sin, and make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness, and seal up vision and prophecy, and confirm the covenant with many, and cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease? if these works could be wrought by any other than the Messiah, we had more reason to desire him than the Messiah himself.

R. J. I confess you have urged good reasons, why the Messiah promised to our fathers, should be spoken of by *Daniel* the prophet; yet you must give me leave to tell you, that our learned men are of opinion, that all this is spoken of *Cyrus* the *Persian* emperor, and that he is Messiah the Prince; and history tells us how he was slain or cut off. As for the true Messiah, we read in the law, that he abideth for ever. And we are confirmed the more in this opinion, because in *Isaiah* the prophet, he is called the Lord's Messiah. If you please, you may consult the place in the beginning of that which you call Chap. xlv. of that prophecy.

Mr. B. I am not ignorant that some of the modern *Rabbins* have interpreted *Daniel's* prophecy of *Cyrus*; for some ages they have abhorred nothing more, than that the true Messiah should be there intended; for if once they yield to that, then they must give up their cause, and they have no cloak for their unbelief: because as I shall shew by and by, the time limited for the coming and cutting off the Messiah, is long since expired. This prophecy therefore, if it hath any truth in it, must have had its accomplishment: and it argues the deplorable case of the Jews, and desperate shifts they are put to, that they can find no more probable person than *Cyrus* to accommodate this prophecy to. I pray do but consider, which of all those works the Messiah was to do, can in any tolerable sense be applied to *Cyrus*? did he take
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away sin? or bring in an everlasting righteousness? or make reconciliation for iniquity? or seal up vision and prophecy? or confirm the covenant with many? or cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease? nay, was there any such thing as sacrifice or oblation in his days, for him to put an end to? nay, was not he a means of reviving sacrifices and oblations in after-times?

Again, let it be considered, that the limited time, here spoken of, doth begin from the going forth of the commandment to restore *Jerusalem*, that is expressed in the prophecy. Now some learned men and good chronologers are of opinion, that the commandment here spoken of, did not commence or begin till many years after *Cyrus* his death. This is evident, that there were several commandments and decrees from the *Persian* emperors about this matter. The first was made by *Cyrus*, in the first year of his empire; and some think this was not the commandment spoken of in *Daniel*, because it was only for the building of the temple; whereas that of *Daniel* was for the building of *Jerusalem*: besides, it had little or no effect; within the space of three or four years it came to nothing, till after the death of *Cyrus*, there came forth another decree from *Darius*, (supposed to be *Darius Hytaspes*, the third emperor of the *Persians*) for the building of the temple. Of this we read *Ezra* vi. and it seems to be a revival of the decree of *Cyrus*; the roll whereof, upon search made, was found at *Achmet* in the province of the *Medes*. Besides this decree of *Cyrus* and *Darius*, we read of another decree or commandment of *Artaxerxes* in *Ezra* vii, who is supposed to be he that was called *Longimanus*. This was a more authentick decree or commandment than either of the former; for it was made, as 'tis in *Ezra* vii. 14. by the king and his seven counsellors, which was the highest legislative power among the *Persians*. Here was not only a proclamation of liberty, but a formal commission, and that from the king and his council. Authority is given to *Ezra* to erect a civil government and a magistracy over the people, with power over the estates, liberties, and lives of men; and this is likely to be the commandment for the building of *Jerusalem*: for it is not the walls and houses,

so much as rule and government, that make and constitute a city.

And if the going forth of the commandment, to restore and build *Jerusalem*, which is the *Epocha* of time now limited and determined, be understood, as it is by some, of the first decree or commandment of *Cyrus*; then he can't be Messiah the Prince, at whose cutting off the time must determine. He did not live long after that commandment. The temple was not built, nor was there any sacrifice or oblation therein during all his short reign. The things here foretold, were not accomplished till above four hundred years after his death.

It is true, he is once called the Anointed of the Lord, because he was designed and employed by God in that special service of ruining the *Babylonian* empire: but doth it therefore follow, that he is intended in this prophecy, when no one word or circumstance therein is applicable to him? and when he was dead some hundreds of years before the determined time mentioned in the prophet did expire? you may as well say *Saul* or *Zedekiah* is intended, seeing both of them are called in scripture the Lord's anointed.

Having thus proved that the true and only Messiah is here spoken of, it remains now that I should shew how the time limited for his coming is long since expired. This is expressly said to be seventy weeks from the going forth of the commandment, to restore and build *Jerusalem*. That by seventy weeks are to be understood seventy sevens of years, a day being put for a year, and a week for seven years, which makes full four hundred ninety years, is generally owned by the Jews as well as the christians. The learned *Kimchi* upon this place doth acknowledge it; so doth *Jarchi*, Rab. *Saadias* and others. And that four hundred ninety years are gone and past since the commandment came forth for the rebuilding and restoring of *Jerusalem*, I suppose will not be denied. There are above four times seventy weeks from that time to this. This, then, will inevitably follow, that the Messiah is long since come.

R. J. The christians themselves can't agree when these 70 weeks did begin or end; which weakens their argument from this prophecy.

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Mr. B.

Mr. B. It is confest, what you say is true ; there is a great difference amongst learned men, in their computation of *Daniel's* weeks ; they are not agreed, as I said before, at which of the commandments for the building of *Jerusalem* they do begin ; nor at the which of these two seasons they end ; whether at the death of the Messiah, or at the utter subversion and destruction of the temple at *Jerusalem*. And there is some difference also in their accounts, which is occasioned by the defect of history ; the number and years of the *Persian* kings, through whose reigns that account runs, are differently recorded by most authentick historians : but all this doth not invalidate my argument ; nor is that at all concerned in the chronological computation of those times, or of *Daniel's* weeks. It is sufficient to my purpose, that by the consent of all, the time is long since past, and therefore the Messiah is long since come. And this I might further tell you, that the differences among the Jews about the beginning and ending of the seventy years captivity, are more, and greater than the differences among christians about the seventy weeks in this prophecy : yea, the ancient Jews were so convinced the Messiah was to come about the time that these seventy weeks did determine, that nothing extraordinary did appear in any person, but presently they were in suspense whether he were the Messiah. Yea, *Josephus* tells us in his seventh book of the *Jewish* wars, that it was their confident expectation of the Messiah's coming about that season, that put them upon that unequal and fatal war with the *Romans*. Yea, and the *Talmud* tells us, they were the more obstinate in the war, by their daily and hourly expectation, that their Messiah, who was to come about that time, would appear to their help ; and seeing (as they thought) he came not then, they have now no other account or reckoning : yea, in their *Talmud* they curse those who compute the time in which the Messiah shall come.

After a little pause, when nothing was objected, Mr. B. proceeded and said, I shall turn you to the third and last testimony that I shall bring to prove the Messiah is long since come ; and that is in the prophecy of *Malachi*, chap. iii. 1. Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall

shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek he shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant whom you delight in, behold he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. That the Messiah is the subject here spoken of is granted by the Jews themselves. *Aben Ezra, Rambam, and Kimchi*, and others of your learned masters apply this prophecy to him. The words of *Kimchi* are express: *This is the King, the Messiah, and this is the angel of the covenant.* The Messiah, was the Lord, whom the Jews your fathers sought, whose coming they long looked for and earnestly prayed for. He was the angel of the covenant, God's messenger, who was, as we observed before, out of *Daniel*, to confirm the covenant with many. By him the new covenant was to be confirmed and ratified. Now that which is predicated of the Messiah by this prophet, is this, that he should come suddenly to his temple; his coming there must be whilst the temple was yet standing and in being. And 'tis for this reason that the prophet *Haggai* tells us, *Hag. ii. 9.* that the glory of the later house shall be greater than the former, because the Messiah, who is there called the desire of all nations, should in a little while come to it, and afford it his personal presence. You know yourselves that in respect of any other glory, the later temple was far inferior to the former. It was not comparable with it for magnificence of structure; hence it is that those of the fathers who were ancient men, and had seen the first house, when the foundation of the other was laid, they wept with a loud voice; it grieved them to think what disproportion there was like to be between the former and the later house.

R. J. But this second temple was greatly beautified by *Herod* about three hundred years after it was built; and it might be said with respect to that, that the glory of the later house should be great above that of the former.

Mr. B. 'Tis true, the latter house was greatly beautified by *Herod*, but it does not appear that it was enlarged by him; he built it higher, but it was still upon the old foundation; and when he had finished what he

undertook, there was no comparison between this and the former temple. Do but consider the treasure that *David* provided, besides what *Solomon* added for the building of the first house; we find it was one hundred thousand tallents of gold, and one million talents of silver, besides brasse and iron without weight. We may rationally compute, that *Herod* in all his wealth and glory was not worth one tenth part of this treasure; nay, all *Herod's* revenue was hardly sufficient to find bread for *Solomon's* workmen, which were above three hundred and thirty thousand men; nor is it likely that he employed so many in the whole work as *Solomon* did to oversee his labourers. But besides the magnificence of the fabrick, there were sundry privileges which added a great glory to the first temple, that were wanting in the second, viz. fire from heaven to consume the sacrifices, *Urim* and *Thummim*, the ark of the covenant, the mercy-seat, the cherubim, and oracles from thence, the cloud filling the temple, the spirit of prophecy: these indeed were the chiefest glory of the first temple; and the Jews acknowledge this, as they do in their *Talmud*, that all these privileges and pledges of God's presence were wanting in the second temple. With what face then can you compare the one with the other, or prefer the glory of the one to the glory of the other? There was nothing doubtless that gave the latter house this preference, or rendered it more glorious than the former, but the Messiah's coming to it, and appearing in it, who was the Lord whom they sought, and who was the desire of all nations, or one to be desired by them.

The exhibiting of him to the world, was the end of the building of the temple, and of all the worship therein performed; and so by his coming unto it, more abundant honour and glory were conferred upon it.

Thus, I hope, I have sufficiently proved that the Messiah was to come during the standing of the second temple, and that being long since utterly destroyed (as it has been for above these seventeen hundred years) it must needs follow, that the Messiah is long since come: which was the thing to be proved.

R. J. Sir, I must needs acknowledge you have offered and urged strong arguments to prove the Messiah is already come; and I may not conceal it from you, that many of our masters have been long of this mind, that for our sins (which are many and great) he is kept hid in paradise, or in the sea, or that he dwells among the lepers at the gates of *Rome*, waiting for a call from heaven, to go and gather the dispersed Jews, and deliver them out of the hands of those that ride upon their backs; therefore, suppose we grant your first assertion, *that the Messiah is long since come*, how will you prove your second, *that Jesus of Nazareth is he*.

Mr. B. To that I now hasten, and I do not doubt but, by God's assistance, to make it manifest beyond all contradiction. Two arguments only shall be insisted upon:

1. That Jesus of *Nazareth* had no other to stand in competition with him.

2. That all that was prophesied of old, touching the Messiah, is verified and fulfilled in him.

1. That Jesus of *Nazareth* had no other to stand in competition with him. It is a remarkable providence of God, that he should be without a competitor; that there is none else (the Jews themselves being judges) that can have the title, dignity or office of the Messiah appropriated to him. 'Tis true there have been some *Pseudo-Messiahs*, or pretenders to this dignity, but they are disclaimed by yourselves as seducers and causers of great misery to your people and nation. Of this sort were *Theudas* and *Judas of Galilee*; but the more famous false Messiah was *Barchochab* the son of the star; he feigned himself to be the Messiah, and said, that scripture was spoken of him, *There shall come a star out of Jacob*, &c. *Rabbi Akiba*, a man of great fame in those times, when he saw him, said, *This is the King, the Messiah*. This *Barchochab* was (as some affirm) in *Jerusalem* before its destruction, and *Akiba* applied unto him that of the prophet *Haggai*, *The desire of all nations shall come*. To him not only the common people, but the chief Doctors and Rabbins did join themselves, and aided him against the *Romans*, until he perished himself, and caused many

others to perish with him. About forty eight years after the destruction of *Jerusalem* (if we may credit the most approved historians of those times) rose another cheat called *Bencozbi*, (some indeed of the *Jewish* writers will have this *Bencozbi* and the forementioned *Barchochab* to be the same person.) In short this is his history: the Jews that remained, after *Jerusalem* was destroyed, made a city called *Bitter*, the metropolis or chief seat of the kingdom, and took this false Christ for their king: the emperor *Adrian* besieged them in this city, and at length he took it, and cut off the head of *Bencozbi*. In this war they that speak of the least, affirm that forty-five thousand Jews lost their lives; and such a devastation was made of the whole nation, as that to this day they could never gather together in considerable numbers in any part of the world. In the reign of *Theodosius* the second, one *Moses* of *Crete* acted the part of a false Saviour upon the stage of the world; he gave out that he was a second *Moses*, a prophet like unto him that God had sent from heaven, and he would lead all the Jews that followed him through the sea to the continent, dry-shod. For a year together he persuaded them in their towns and cities to leave all and follow him, and he would conduct them into the promised land. At an appointed time great multitudes of men, women, and children repair to him, whom he brings to an high promontory hanging over the sea; at his command many cast themselves down, some of which were drowned, others were saved by christian fishermen, who dissuaded them (all they could) from so mad and murderous an act. The Jews seeing themselves deluded, thought to lay hands upon the impostor, but their false *Moses* (as if he had been a true devil) was gone and vanished, they knew not how nor whither. This occasioned many Jews to embrace the christian faith, and to leave that way of Judaism which was subject to such dangerous and costly deceits. In the year one thousand one hundred thirty-five, one *David Alroi*, or *David El David*, gave out that he was the Messiah, and that God had sent him to deliver his people *Israel*. The king of *Persia* (in whose dominion he was) laid hold of him; but he being a cunning magician freed himself, and did many pranks,

pranks to the great enraging of that king against the Jews. They, to prevent the ruin that was coming upon them by his means, made a great feast for this mock Messiah, and when he was asleep in his drunkenness they cut off his head, and presented it to the king, who thereupon was appeased and reconciled to them.

We read also of one called the king of *Thabor*, who would needs be the Messiah, whom *Charles* the fifth caused to be burnt. And *Maimonides* reckons up four more false Christs, that did arise among the Jews in *Spain* and *France*, that brought great misery upon themselves and their followers. But you have heard enough of this subject. Evident it is, that unless it be Jesus of *Nazareth* our blessed Saviour, there is none that with any colour of probability can be supposed to be the Messiah. To say (as you hinted but now) that he kept hid in paradise, or in the sea, till the time of his shewing to *Israel*, is such a ridiculous subterfuge or fancy, that your own masters disclaim it, and all rational considerate persons are ashamed of it.

2. The second particular that I proposed to prove, was this, that all that was prophesied of old, concerning the Messiah, is verified and fulfilled in Jesus of *Nazareth*. The holy prophets (who were divinely inspired) did plainly describe and characterize him that was to come, to the end the church might know and receive him at his coming. Now I shall shew you how all the prophetic characters of the Messiah do center in the person of our blessed Saviour.

1. The promised Messiah is described by his lineage and descent: he was to be of the seed of *Abraham*, of the tribe of *Judah*, and of the house of *David*; this needs no proof, because it is universally acknowledged. And yet by the way, this very acknowledgment doth marr all expectation of a Messiah to come; because you are now at an utter loss about all genealogy since your dispersion, and are not in a capacity to discover a Messiah by this scripture-sign of him. Now that Jesus of *Nazareth* was thus descended, may easily be demonstrated: there is no question of his being of the seed of *Abraham*, and of the tribe of *Judah*; the only doubt
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that can be, is, whether he was of the family of *David*, unto which the promise of the Christ was restrained. Now this is proved at large by two witnesses, *Matthew* and *Luke*, who wrote the history of his life in the very age wherein he lived. And if it be objected, that they were two of his disciples, and so their testimony in that case is not to be taken, I answer, that the testimony they gave as to this matter, was taken out of the unquestionable records of those times, or else, why did not your fathers except against what they wrote? and why, in the midst of their rage against him and his followers, was it not once objected by them, that he was not of the family of *David*, and so could not be the person that he pretended to be?"

R. J. "The historians you speak of, *Matthew* and *Luke*, do not at all prove the matter in question, which is, that Jesus did spring from the family of *David*; for you Christians believe that he was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of *Mary* whilst a virgin, and that *Joseph* was only his reputed father. Now both the genealogies of *Matthew* and *Luke* belong unto *Joseph* alone, as may appear if you consult the beginning of the one, and the end of the other. Seeing then that Jesus was no otherwise related to *Joseph*, but as his mother (as you affirm) was espoused to him, he cannot be reckoned in *Joseph's* right to belong unto the family of *David*."

Mr. B. I know this hath been objected of old; but the cavil is occasioned through a mistake: for *Luke* gives us directly the genealogy of the virgin *Mary* the mother of Jesus; and therefore if you compare the evangelists, or historians, as you call them, you will find that whereas *Matthew* makes *Joseph* to descend from *David* by the line of *Solomon*, *Luke* makes *Mary* to descend from *David* by the line of *Nathan*; and *Heli* (the last that is mentioned in that line) was the father of *Mary*, and not of *Joseph*; only he is said to be *Heli's* son, because his daughter was legally contracted or espoused to him. And though the genealogy recorded by *Matthew*, be the genealogy of *Joseph*, and not of *Mary*, from *David* downward; yet herein he proceeds according to the laws of

of genealogies, and the legal way of proving one to be of such a tribe or family. A woman, whatever tribe or family she was of before, after contract of marriage, she was legally accounted to be of that family into which by her espousals she was engrafted: and of that family, and no other was he to be reckoned, who was born of her after such espousals. And this legal relation or translation of families, *Luke* seems to intimate, when he says, *That the mother of Jesus was espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the family of David.* There being no reason to mention his family, but to shew that the genealogy of *Jesus* (the son of her who was espoused to him) was concerned therein.

This may justify the method of *Matthew* in recording the genealogy of *Jesus*, by reckoning up the progenitors of his supposed father; for if you consider, how genealogies are not reckoned by women, there was no better or surer way of declaring his pedigree, who descended of *Mary*, than by his, to whom she was so nearly related. Although it was not without a remarkable providence, that *Jesus* on both sides descended (that is from his mother and supposed father too) from the family and house of *David*."

R. J. " Sir, your arguing hath strength in it; but yet give me leave to tell you, that it doth much invalidate the testimony of these two historians, that they do not altogether agree in their genealogies; and our learned men have observed several omissions and corruptions, especially in *Matthew's* genealogy; and if I had my books by me, I could shew you many knots therein, which I believe you will never be able to untie."

Mr. B. " I do confess, the genealogies of *Matthew* and *Luke* are not without their difficulties; but I will assure you, they are far from being insoluble or insuperable; and if you please (when you have consulted your authors) to bring or send me your objections, I here promise you to return a full and satisfactory answer thereunto, and I question not (by God's assistance) but I shall convince you that there is neither contradiction nor corruption in the genealogies of these two evangelists."

R. J.

R. J. " You promise very fairly : I pray proceed."

Mr. B. " The promised Messiah is described, as by his lineage and descent, so in the second place by the manner of his birth and production ; as he was to be an extraordinary person, so he was to be born and brought forth in an extraordinary manner ; that is, he was to be born of a virgin that never knew a man : this indeed was implied in that first promise which God made to our first parents, where he is called *the seed of the woman*. But it is expressed by the prophet *Isaiah*, chap. vii. 14. *Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel*. For the better understanding of this excellent prophecy, you may please to take notice how *Abaz* and his people were under great consternation by reason of the invasion of two potent princes ; whereupon *Isaiah* is sent unto him with good tidings, that though these two princes *had taken evil counsel against him, it should not stand, but they should be disappointed and broken*. *Abaz* gave little credit to the words of the prophet ; hereupon, he bids him to ask a sign, either in heaven or in earth. *Abaz* refuseth to ask a sign, and adds, that he *will not tempt the Lord*. Whether he spoke this hypocritically, as pretending great veneration and respect to that command where it is written, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God* ; or whether he spoke it prophanely, as not being willing to try or trust the Lord, and commit the event of that business unto him, because he had resolved to send to the king of *Affyria* for help, I shall not now dispute ; the prophet sharply reprehends him, and tells him, though he would not ask a sign, yet God would give a sign, he would do it voluntarily and of his own accord ; *A virgin shall conceive and bear a son*, &c. as if he had said, you think God is not able or willing to save you from these two kings, he will give you an instance of greater power and goodness than this, he will send the Messiah that shall save you from worse and greater enemies than those ; he will work a miracle, to cause woman to conceive without any conjunction with man, and therefore he is surely able to save you out of the hands of these men ; he will make good his

his word concerning his giving his Son to save you from your sins ; much more will he make good his word concerning the saving you from the hands of your enemies."

R. J. " We conceive this prophecy doth no way relate to the birth of *Jesus of Nazareth* ; we know that *Matthew* so applies it, but we think impertinently ; for the birth of the child here promised, was to be a sign to *Abaz* of his deliverance from those two kings that now came up against him ; and of this, the birth of *Jesus* (if he were the Messiah) was not a proper pledge or assurance, because he was not born till some hundreds of years afterwards."

Mr. B. " It is not unusual for those things to be promised for signs, which do not exist in themselves, until after the accomplishment of those things whereof they are signs ; instances of this abound in scripture, see *Exod.* iii. 12. God there tells *Moses* that this should be a sign that he had sent him to *Pharaoh*, the children of *Israel* in after-times, should serve him upon that mountain, where now he appeared to him. A further instance of this you have in *Isa.* vii. 10. though the thing itself in its existence cannot be made a sign, yet it may in the promise and prediction of it ; hereby their faith is confirmed who live in the time of the actual accomplishment of such promises. And as to the case in hand : God doth here assure *Abaz* and the house of *David*, that he would as certainly make good his promise in delivering them from the hands of those they feared, as he would fulfil that great promise of bringing forth the Messiah, and that in a miraculous way, for that he should be conceived and born of a virgin."

R. J. " But pray, Sir, consider what follows ; that the deliverance here promised from those two kings, yea, their ruin and destruction, were to be wrought before this child should come to the years of discretion, which is meant by his knowing to refuse the evil and chuse the good."

Mr. B. " It does not appear that he speaks afterwards in the sixteenth verse, of the same child that he doth in this fourteenth verse ; it is evident he makes use of another

ther word in the *Hebrew*, and it is more than probable that he speaks of another child ; if you look into the beginning of the chapter, you shall find the prophet (and that by the special command of God) took with him *Shear Jashub* his own son, when he went with this message unto the king. This you may suppose, was for some particular reason, or end, in the message which he was to deliver ; his son being then but a child, could be of no use in that whole transaction, unless it were to be an instance of something to be spoken or done ; and doubtless this son of his, was the young child he there intends and instanceth in, before whose growing up to years of discretion, those kings of *Damascus* and *Samaria* should be destroyed.

Yet, if you should quarrel with this interpretation, there is no force in your objection ; for this phrase doth imply no more but this, that in as short a space of time these two kings shall be destroyed, as any child, or this promised child, when he shall be born, shall come to the use of reason and understanding."

R. J. " Suppose I should grant what you say, yet this prophecy is not for your purpose ; for the word that you render a virgin, doth signify any young woman, whether single or married : nay, in the *Proverbs* of *Solomon* it is used for a harlot. I do not see, therefore, why you Christians should put so much stress or weight upon it."

Mr. B. " If this cavil hath any truth in it, I will yield the cause. There are but two ways to know the signification of a word ; either it must be from the etymology, or constant use of it ; as to the etymology of the word, you know it is from *Alam*, which signifies to hide ; which in *Niphal* is hidden or kept close. Hence is *Almah* a virgin ; and she is so called from her being unknown by man, or from the custom in those eastern countries, where virgins were hid and kept close from all common conversation. The *Grecians* also, for the same reason, called virgins, Recluses, or persons shut up, This then is the derivation of the word, and it properly signifies an unknown and an untouched virgin. As to the constant use of it, I can boldly affirm, that where-

ever

ever you meet with it in scripture, it hath the same signification. It is several times used in the scripture in this sense, and in no other : as for that place in the *Proverbs* (I know what you mean) it is in chap. xxx. 12. here is the same word, and it must signify, say you Jews, in this place a harlot : but we Christians see no necessity of it ; we think an unspotted virgin is here also intended ; and that *Agur* intends nothing else, by what he says of her, but the way and manner of men in using crafty devices to corrupt virgins, and to compass their lust upon them : this is such a good man is ignorant of. Thus you see, that if you consider the word either in its derivation, or constant signification, it must be understood of an unspotted virgin, and no other. And that it should be understood in this place, I have yet a further reason, because it is some miraculous thing which is above, and contrary to the ordinary course of nature, that is here spoken of ; and therefore 'tis ushered in with a note of attention, *Behold!* and it is given by God himself as a miraculous sign, as great or greater than *Abaz* could have asked, either in Heaven or in Earth : and therefore it is ridiculous to understand it (as you Jews would have it) of an ordinary conception and birth, or, of another woman's conceiving and bearing a son ; how could that be a prodigy or a miraculous sign, which was done every hour in the day ?

R. J. " But still this cannot be meant of Jesus the son of *Mary*, because the name of this child was to be *Immanuel*."

Mr. B. " By what I have already heard from you, I take you to be a man of greater reading and understanding, than to think there is any force in this objection ; when the prophet says his name shall be called *Immanuel*, he intends what he shall be and do, and not what he shall commonly be called or named. The plain meaning is, he shall be *Immanuel*, that is, God with us, or God and man in one person ; and his work shall be to reconcile God to man, and man to God. Pray, Sir, let me desire you to look a little further, and you will find in the the ninth chapter of this prophecy, a parallel place ; 'tis said in verse 6, that *unto us a child is born, unto us a*

son is given, the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. This is a manifest prophecy of the Messiah; but do you think that these are his proper names? or rather is not this the meaning, that he shall be all that is there expressed? and how often in other places is a thing said to be called, that which it is in its being, quality, or creation?"

R. J. "I am amazed at your answers! I made no doubt of wresting this scripture out of your hands. I pray go on."

Mr. B. "The promised Messiah is described in the third place, as by the manner, so by the place of his birth. This was foretold by the prophet *Micah*, chap. v. 2. to be *Bethlehem Ephratab*; the words are these, *Thou Bethlehem Ephratab, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity.* That the Messiah is here spoken of, is the acknowledgment of the Jews themselves. The *Chaldee Paraphrast* thus reads the words, *Out of thee shall come forth to me the Messiah, who shall have the rule.* That the place of the Messiah's birth is here prophesied of, this also is acknowledged by the Jews, as well as the Christians: when *Herod* of old demanded where the Christ should be born, the chief priests and scribes affirmed (and that unanimously) that he was to be born at *Bethlehem*, and proved what they affirmed by this prophecy of *Micah*. That Jesus our blessed Saviour was born or brought forth at *Bethlehem*, is too manifest to be denied: the wonderful providence of God in bringing this about, is not to be passed over in silence, *Joseph* (his supposed father) and *Mary* his mother, lived in *Galilee* in a mean condition, and had no design, either of dwelling in *Bethlehem*, or taking a journey thither. But about that season, when she was big with child, there went out a decree from *Cæsar Augustus*, that all persons should be taxed, and they must repair to the city or village to which they belong, in order thereunto; this brought *Joseph* and *Mary* at this time to *Bethlehem*: this shewed to what house and lineage they belonged, even that of *David*, as
I said

I said before. It was God surely that put this into *Cæsar's* mind, or else why could they not have been taxed in the places where they dwelt or resided: but to *Bethlehem* they must come, and that for a double reason (which the only wise God foresaw): first, that they may be publickly enrolled for branches of *David's* family, and then secondly, that Jesus might be brought forth there, according to this prophecy. Let this be further noted, that an end is now put to the Jews expectation of another Messiah, because *Bethlehem* is long since utterly destroyed, and is now neither great nor small in the thousands of *Judah*. If there be no such place as *Bethlehem*, it is ridiculous in the Jews to expect the Christ from thence."

R. J. " Pray, Sir, proceed."

Mr. B. " The promised Messiah is described in the fourth place, by his offices which he should execute: the first is that of a king. In the place but now cited out of *Micah*, he was to be ruler or king in *Israel*. *Zach. ix. 9. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion, shout O daughter of Jerusalem, thy king cometh unto thee, he is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.* You Jews expect a pompous prince or king, that like another *Alexander* shall war with the nations of the world, and as a triumphing conqueror overcome them: that shall redeem you out of your captivity in all lands, and restore you again to your own land. Do but search the scripture, and you will find no promise of such a prince or king; *he is lowly*, saith *Zachary*, *riding upon an ass*: he confessed indeed he was a king, but withal, he said, *his kingdom was not of this world*; no, as it is an everlasting, so it is a spiritual kingdom; he rules in the hearts of his subjects; he makes them *a willing and obedient people in the day of his power*; he makes all his subjects kings, and hath provided for every one of them a kingdom. The second office is that of a priest; *David* speaking of him in *Psal. cx.* says, *thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedeck*. His priesthood was not temporary, as *Aaron's* was, but it is an everlasting and unchangeable priesthood: the high priest of old was but a type of him; *he offered up himself to God and the father, a sacrifice*

crifice of a sweet smelling savour ; by which offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified, and made reconciliation for their sins. He by his own blood (not the blood of bulls and goats, which could not possibly take away sins, but by his own blood) is entred into the holy place, (not that made with hands, which also was but a figure or type, but) into Heaven itself, where he appears in the presence of God for us.

The third office is that of a prophet ; so *Moses* told your fathers of old, *Deut. xviii. 18.* That God would raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto him, and he would put words in his mouth, and he should speak all that he should command him ; and whosoever would not hearken to his words, God would require it of him. The accomplishment of this excellent prophecy is in the person of *Jesus of Nazareth* ; he was not only anointed to be a king, and a priest, but a prophet too ; he was raised up from amongst your brethren (as you have heard ;) he was like unto *Moses* : the other prophets that succeeded in their several generations, were none of them like unto him ; they instituted no new laws or ordinances for the worship and service of God ; they all built upon that foundation which he laid ; this honour God conferred upon *Moses*, to be a lawgiver to his people : but now, in after-times there was a prophet to arise, which should be like unto him ; and the similitude consisted mainly in this, that he should make new laws and ordinances in the Church. And who was this prophet, but the blessed *Jesus* ? he hath revealed the mind and will of God in another manner than ever *Moses* did ; he hath discovered the mystery and meaning of all the mosaical ordinances and institutions ; their nature, use and end, were much unknown to your fathers, though they were daily conversant in and about them.

I dare affirm, that we have thousands of illiterate persons among us christians, that can give a far better account of the use and end of all the mosaical rites, institutions and sacrifices, than the most learned *Rabbins* that you have, or that your church ever had ; and having unvailed and abolished the old, he hath superinduced new ordinances and institutions, such as are more easy and
Intelligible,

intelligible, and better suited to the adult state of his church and people ; and in this he hath shewed himself a prophet like unto *Moses*, yea, a greater prophet than he: and with this agrees the testimony of the ancient Jews. The Author of *Sepher Ikkarim*, thus writes, *in all that space of time, wherein the prophets followed Moses, until the ceasing of prophecy, there was none like unto him ; but hereafter shall arise a prophet (even the Messiah) who shall be like him, yea, a greater prophet than Moses was.* Now to close my discourse upon this head, let me shew you how the commination contained in this prophecy is fallen upon your people and nation. God doth here threaten, that *he will require it of him, or them, who shall not hearken to the words of this prophet.* There is evidently a Meiosis in the words, that is, there is more implied than is expressed : the meaning is, that he will utterly destroy or reject such for their disobedience. How sadly is this fulfilled in the event ? your fathers, who for despising and disobeying the former prophets, were only for a season corrected and chastened, and after a while delivered again out of their greatest miseries ; they and their children, for their disobedience to this prophet, are utterly cut off and exterminated ; so *severely hath God required this at their hands.*"

R. J. " Pray, Sir, go on."

Mr. B. " I shall add but one description more of the promised Messiah ; he is in the fifth place described by his great sufferings which he was to undergo in the days of his flesh. The Jews, as I said before, expected a conquering, and not a suffering Messiah ; nothing could be more contrary to their expectation, than a Messiah that should live in a low and mean condition, subject to all the miseries of this life, and at last to death itself ; therefore this note or description of him, is more fully asserted than all the rest : this was more than implied in that first promise or prophecy, where the Lord says, *that the serpent should bruise his heel.* 'Tis worthy of our observation, that all the particularities of Christ's latter sufferings, even those that seemed to be most casual, were foreknown of God, and foretold in his word. As for instance, his being betrayed by one of his friends, familiars and followers ;

of this *David* spake as a type of *Christ*, *Psal.* xli. 9. *Mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.* See further in *Psal.* lv. Again the selling him for *Thirty pieces of silver* (which was the goodly price he was priz'd at) and the use that this money should afterward be put to, (even to make a purchase of a potter's field) this was spoken of by *Zachariab*, Chap. xi. 12, 13. Again, the flight of his followers, and their forsaking him, were foretold by the same prophet, *Zach.* xiii. 7. *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered.* Again, the severe and fordid usage he met with by being scourged, buffeted, and spit upon, was also prophesied of, *Isa.* l. 6. there the *Messiah* is brought in speaking after this manner, *The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, &c.* and then it follows, *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.* Again, his death was foretold by *Daniel*, that it should be a violent death, *Dan.* ix. 26. *After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself.* Again, his being lifted up upon a cross, that was prefigured and foretold by *Moses* when he lifted up the serpent in the wilderness; and by *David*, when speaking in the person of *Christ*, he says, *Psal.* xxii. 14. *All my bones are out of joint.* Again, the piercing of his hands and feet, were spoken of in the same *Psal.* ver. 16. *They pierced my hands and my feet.* And *Zachary* speaks how the Jews in the last days shall look on him whom they have pierced. That passage about their parting his garments, was predicted in the same *Psal.* ver. 18. *They parted my garments amongst them, and cast lots upon my vesture.* In that *Psal.* also you will find a prediction of that cruel mocking and derision that he met withal, ver. 7. *All they that see me, laugh me to scorn, they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, he trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.* Yea, that bitter cry that came from him upon the cross is recorded in this *Psal.* ver. 1. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken*

forſaken me ! Yea, in their giving him gall and vinegar to drink, that alſo is fore-ſpoken of *Pſalm* lxiv. 21. *They gave me alſo gall for meat, and in my thirſt they gave me vinegar to drink.* All theſe things were done, not only to ſatisfy the luſts and wills of men, but to fulfil the Scripture, the word of God. There is one place in *Iſaiah*, Chap. liii, of that prophecy, that ſpeaks more amply of this ſubject, and indeed it ſeems rather to be a hiſtory than a prophecy, of Chriſt's ſuffering. It begins with a deſcription of his mean and low condition ; *He ſhall grow up as a tender plant*, not as a tall and ſtately Cedar ; but as a ſhrub or tender plant ready to be cropt by every beaſt and to be trod under by every foot : and as *a root out of the dry ground* ; this may reſpect the family of *Joſeph* and *Mary*, out of which he ſprang, and the low and contemptible condition thereof ; he was ſo unfuitable to the expectation of the Jews, who looked for a Meſſiah (as I ſaid before) that ſhould be a temporal monarch, ſhining in outward glory, and ruling with viſible power and greatneſs ; that when he came, they *hid their faces from him*, they *deſpiſed him and eſteemed him not* ; when they ſaw him, he had *no form or comelineſs for which they ſhould deſire him*. In the next place the prophet deſcribes his ſufferings and afflictions, and this he doth in great variety of expreſſions ; he ſpeaks of him, as a *man of ſorrows*, and *acquainted with grief*, *who bore our griefs*, *carried our ſorrows*, *was ſmitten of God*, and *afflicted* ; *who was wounded for our tranſgreſſions*, *bruised for our iniquities*, *the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him*, and *with his ſtripes we are healed* : *all we like ſheep have gone aſtray*, and *the Lord had laid on him the iniquities of us all*. *He was oppreſſed*, and *he was afflicted*, yet *he opened not his mouth* ; *he is brought as a lamb to the ſlaughter*, and *as a ſheep before her ſhearers is dumb*, ſo *he opened not his mouth*. *He was cut off out of the land of the living*, for the tranſgreſſion of my people *was he ſtricken*. *It pleaſed the Lord to bruise him* : *he hath put him to grief*. *He hath poured out his ſoul unto death* : *he was numbred with tranſgreſſors*, and *he bore the ſins of many*. I ſhall not ſtand now to open all theſe prophetic paſſages, and apply them to Chriſt. 'Tis the man-

ner of the prophets to speak of things to come, as if they were past or present; and that is the reason why *Isaiab* speaks all along in the past or present tense. This is such a prophecy of Christ as belongs to him, not only properly, but immediately. In other places and prophecies (especially in the Psalms) *David* or some other as a type of Christ is spoken of in the first-place, when the Messiah is principally intended, but here it is quite otherwise, Christ himself is immediately spoken of: that the Messiah is here intended, is confessed by your ancient masters; the *Chaldee Paraphrast* expressly names the Messiah, and interprets the whole chapter of him. So do the *Targum* and the *Talmud* itself. In *Alsbeck*, on the very place, it is thus written, that it is concerning *Messiah the King* that these words are spoken; and this, he says, is determined by our masters with one consent. In vain therefore do some later Jews attempt to make *Josiah* or *Jeremiah*, or the whole body of the nation, the subject of this prophecy. To which of these can all or any indeed of the forementioned passages in any tolerable sense be accommodated? Rightly therefore doth one call this chapter of *Isaiab*, the torture or rack of the Jewish Rabbins. *Hulsius*, the Hebrew professor in *Breda*, informs us, in a treatise of the Jewish theology, how some Jews told him that their masters could easily have extricated themselves from all other places in the prophets, if *Isaiab* in this place had but held his peace: though that was but a vain boast, because other prophecies (some of which you have now heard) are as perplexing to them as this. Yet it appears by their own confession that this prophecy doth greatly hamper and entangle them. Yea, the very reading and perusing of this place of scripture (which is one cause why I am so long upon it) hath been a means of converting many Jews to the christian religion. Hear the confession of *Johannes Isaac*, a German Jew, and afterwards a christian professor at *Cologne*, Anno 1558. This, saith he, I do ingeniously profess, that the fifty-third of *Isaiab* did draw me to the christian faith; for more than a thousand times have I read that chapter thorough, and I have accurately compared it with many translations, and have found that there is a hundred times more

more mystery concerning Christ contained in the *Hebrew* text than can be found in any other translation; and then he declares how at *Frankfort*, he disputed with five Rabbins, and from this very chapter did so stop their mouths, that they had not one word to answer. *Andradius* tells us how he knew several Jews inhabitants of the inner *Africa*, who, by reading and ruminating upon this very scripture, were induced to leave their friends and estates, and with inflamed desires to consecrate themselves to Christ: he adds, that he asked some of them what it was in that fiftythird of *Isaiab*, that wrought such a conviction upon them? they answered, that one passage did more touch them than all the rest: and that is the clause which we translate *smitten of God and afflicted*; the words are *mucke elohim umeunne*, which they said were thus to be rendred, *God himself was smitten and humbled*. By which words they assured themselves the whole chapter was to be understood, not of a man, but of God himself made man, that he might bear and blot out our sins.

Let me add but one thing more, that the holy prophets of old did not only foretel the humiliation, but the exaltation of the Messiah; all which prophecies also have had their accomplishment in Jesus of Nazareth: consult *Isa. lxi. 1, 2, 3. Who is this that cometh from Edom, with died garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? That speak in righteousness, mighty to save! Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me.* This obscure prophecy, by many christian expositors, is applied to the passion of Christ. But Rabbi *Samuel*, a converted Jew, in a little *Arabick* treatise doth learnedly apply it to the exaltation of Christ; from him I first learned the interpretation, and for that reason I choose to urge it; though since I find that *Mercer* and others have expounded it the same way. All the phrases in this prophecy speak forth the triumph of Christ in his resurrection and ascension; *he is glorious in his apparel*, as being dyed or stained with the blood of his enemies; his garments are like him that treads in the
wine-

wine-fat, when the juice of the press'd grapes is sprinkled upon him that presseth them; he is *travelling in the greatness of his strength*; that is, strongly conquering and destroying all his adversaries. Under the names of *Edom* and *Bozrah* are set out his universal conquest and triumph over all his and his church's enemies; he is mighty to save and to defend all those that trust in him, and rely upon him; he does not say passively, that he was trodden in the wine-press alone, but actively, that he trod the wine-press alone; all his adversaries were under his feet; and therefore it follows, *I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury: their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, &c.* There are in that one book of the Psalms most clear prophecies of Christ's exaltation in all the branches of it.

1. *David* speaks of his resurrection, Psal. xvi. 10 *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thine holy One to see corruption*; this he spake of the resurrection of Christ, knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne. He could not speak this of himself; for after he had served his generation by the will of God, he fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption; but now for Christ, he rose again from the dead, and saw no corruption.

2. Again *David* speaks of his ascension, Psal. lxxviii. 18. *Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God may dwell among them.* The Psalmist here speaks to God; and it must be understood, saith Rabbi *Samuel* (in the forementioned book) of God in our nature; for God, considered in his divine nature and essence, can neither descend nor ascend.

3. Again, *David* speaks of his session at the right hand of God, Psal. cx. 1. *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.* By *David's* Lord here we must understand the Messiah, who, though in respect of his human nature, was *David's* son, yet, in respect of his divine nature, was

David's

David's Lord. This Christ then, who is the eternal son of God, being made flesh, and having assumed our nature into a personal union with his Godhead, in that nature which he graciously assumed, he suffered and made satisfaction for our sins, and in that nature he ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, from whence he will one day come again to judge the quick and the dead.

Both time and strength would fail me to cite all the prophecies of the Messiah that are in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, much more to expound and apply them. Several of the most considerable I have a little touched upon, and have shewed you how they are verified and fulfilled in Jesus of *Nazareth*; which was the thing to be demonstrated."

R. J. "Sir, your arguing hath not only silenced me; but in some measure convinced me. I know not what's the matter, I find a strange and unwonted working within me."

Mr. B. "Take heed of smothering and stifling convictions; some of your fathers have done so to their cost. Be not ashamed to be truth's captive, and to be conquered by it. Truth is mighty and will prevail. What if you should from this day forward become a christian? you will never repent it. And let me tell you, you are not the first of your nation that hath so done. At the first publishing of the Gospel of Christ, though the most of your nation persisted in unbelief, yet many thousands believed, and repented, and were baptized; and in later times we are not without instances of this very thing. I told you, but now, of some, and I can (if need be) give you a list of a great many more. In the year 1310, *Nicholas de Lyra*, of a Jew became a christian, and hath written an excellent treatise, proving by irrefragable arguments, that the Messiah is come, and that no other is to be expected. About that time *Paulus Bungenfis* turned christian also, and wrote against *Judaism*. *Elias Levita*, commonly called the *Grammarian*, left his Rabbiniſm, and entred the church of Christ by baptism, bringing thirty Jews more with him to be baptized, about the year 1517. *Hieronimus de sancta fide* (as he is called) from a Jew

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was converted to christianity, and wrote a book called *Hebræomastix*, or the Jews scourge; in which he whips them with their own *Talmud* and approved Rabbins, making their own authors to prove that Jesus is the Christ. When this book was published in *Spain*, it is reported, that by the convincing arguments therein contained, above five thousand Jews were turned to the faith. One *Paulus Ricius* in the court of the emperor *Maximilian*, of a Jew was converted to christianity, and wrote many things against his old misbelief. *Antonius Margarita*, converted in heart and baptized, converts his hand and pen against the Jews. *Ernestus Ferdinandus*, of a Jew, became a professor of the christian faith, and writes a book which he calls *Flagellum Judæorum*. *Paulus Weidnerus* turned to christianity, and in his writings hath called upon his backsliding brethren the Jews, and having found Jesus himself, bid them *come and see*. I could tell you of *Christianus Gersom*, and *Emanuel Tremellius* (who hath worthily contributed towards the translation of the bible) with many others. And I doubt not but there may be many thousands of your nation, that are greatly convinced and persuaded that Jesus is the Messiah, though they do not openly profess it. Will you give me leave to relate a story that I have met with in the writings of *Epiphanius*, a credible and renowned author; it is concerning one *Joseph*, a Jew, who lived in the days of *Constantine the great*. This learned and worthy person doth solemnly protest he had it, in order, as he relates it, from *Joseph's* own mouth. This *Joseph* lived with the patriarch of the Jews, called *Ellel*. The patriarch being ready to die, sends *Joseph* to the bishop of *Tiberias*, to desire him to come to him, under pretence of his being his physician. The bishop coming to him, he beseecheth him to baptize him; whereupon the servants are commanded to make ready some water, as if it had been for some medicinal use, and then they were all commanded to withdraw. *Joseph* looks through some crevice of the door, and seeth the bishop baptize the patriarch. Three days after, the patriarch dying, bequeathed the tuition of his son (not yet of age) to *Joseph* and another. These things stuck in *Joseph's* mind, and made him desirous to know

know more of the christian religion. And there being a certain secret place of supposed treasure, which *Joseph* had now the keys of, he opens it, and findeth no money, but the *Gospel of John*, and the *Acts of the Apostles*, translated into *Hebrew*, and with them *Matthew's* genealogy. The reading of these increased his perplexities, but yet did not persuade him to be baptized. After this, he fell into a sore and dangerous disease, and he apprehended that Christ appeared to him, telling him, he should recover, and exhorting him to believe in him; which he promised to do, and recovered; but continuing obstinate, he fell sick again, and that so desperately, that they had no hope of his life. The Jews coming about him to perform those ceremonies, and give that advice which they use to do to dying persons, one of the chief of them (an ancient man, skilful in their law) came to him, and whispered these words in his ear; *Believe that Jesus, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, being the son of God, and afterwards born of Mary, is the Christ of God, and was raised from the dead, and shall come again to judge the dead and living.* And thus *Joseph* came to know, that among their last mysteries, the Jews secretly persuaded dying men to believe in Jesus. There is a great deal more in the story, which I have not leisure now to write. It ends thus: that Christ appeared again to him in a vision, and gave him power to work a miracle for his conviction, and still he delayed, till at last being advanced by the young patriarch *Judas* to a place of rule, he exercised so much severity over the wicked priests, that they conspired against him, and rushing one day into his house, they find him reading the gospels; and snatching the book out of his hand, they drew him to the synagogue, and scourged him, till the bishop of the city came and delivered him. After this, meeting him on the way, they cast him into the river *Cydrus*, and thought they had drowned him; but being delivered, he then delayed no longer, but professed himself a Christian; and so went to *Constantine* the emperor, and told him all that had befallen him. The emperor much esteemed him, and gave

him power to build churches among the Jews; which was all that he desired.

To conclude, I look upon these and such like particular converts amongst the Jews, to be only as first-fruits; we Christians, expect, ere long, a full harvest in the conversion of your whole nation. We believe, as well as you, that there are many promises and prophecies concerning the Jewish nation, that have not yet had their final accomplishment; give me leave to read some of them, *Isa. xi. 11, 12. 13. It shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time, to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.* You may read much more to this purpose in chapters lx. and lxii. of *Isaiab's* prophecy, *Ezek. xxxvii. 21, 22, 23, 24. Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land. And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all. Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things; but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God, And David my servant shall be King over them, and they all shall have one shepherd.* *Hosea iii. 4, 5. The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim. Afterwards shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their*

their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days. Zach. x. 6, 7, 8. I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them, for I have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the Lord their God, and will hear them. And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine: yea, their children shall see it, and be glad. I will hiss for them, and gather them, for I have redeemed them: and they shall increase as they have increased. They shall remember me in far countries, and they shall live with their children, and turn again. I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria, and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon, and place shall not be found for them. And I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord. These and such like prophecies are the ground of our faith and prayer, for the calling and conversion of your nation. To which I may add, that the same thing is foretold in the writings of the Apostles of our Lord. Paul tells us, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved. For proof of which, he cites a passage in Isaiah, where it is written, there shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. He says, The casting away of the Jews, was the reconciling of the Gentiles; but the receiving of them again, shall be life from the dead. He says further, that they are beloved for the father's sake: and if they abide not in unbelief, though they are now cut off, they shall be grafted in; for God is able to graff them in again, and though to this day, when Moses is read, there is a vail upon their hearts: yet nevertheless, they shall turn again unto the Lord, and the vail shall be taken away. There is then a greater accord between you and us than you are aware of. Setting aside those foolish dreams that some of you have, about enjoying sensual pleasures, as Behemoth, Ziz, the wine of Paradise, and the like;

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there is nothing in your own expectations, but we believe you shall be partakers of. Nay, we suppose you may return to your own land, enjoy great riches, and rule in the world; and be filled with the light and knowledge of the will and worship of God, so as to be a guide, blessing, and reviving to the Gentile churches; but all this we say, must come to pass in God's own appointed season. When the time, the set time is come, then will God take away the vail from before the eyes of your nation and people, and incline their hearts to receive and believe in him, whom their forefathers rejected. Then shall be fulfilled that which is foretold by *Zachariah* the prophet, *They shall look upon him whom they pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.*"

R. J. "Sir, your words carry a kind of charm in them: I think (were it not for one thing) I should forthwith become a profelyte to the christian faith and name."

Mr. B. "Pray what is that?"

R. J. "I will be plain with you, it is the idolatry of the christians. *Jehovah* is a jealous God; our fathers have smarted for giving his glory to another. This is the abominable thing that God hates. You may imagine it is no small offence to us Jews, to see as great, or greater idolatry among the christians than is among the very Pagans. How oft have I seen them worshiping a wafer, which they sometimes call the Host, and sometimes the body of Christ? and I have heard it determined in one of their councils, which, I think, they call the council of *Trent*, *That all christians ought to give the same worship to it, which they give to God himself.* Now, though you think we Jews have no faith yet we have so much sense and reason, as to know a wafer-cake is not the blessed *Jehovah*. And pardon the expression, we think it no less than horrid blasphemy to call it so, and no other than gross idolatry to worship it as such.

Again, you christians worship the cross of Christ, that is, a piece of wood with a cross upon it; for as to the very cross on which he was crucified, we suppose that is not among you; and if it were, we think it strange that
you

you should bow down to it and worship it. Surely the Heathens worshipping stocks and stones was not more direct idolatry. Your *Paul* hath said, a crucified Christ is a *stumbling-block to the Jews*; I will assure you, the adoring of a cross or a piece of wood, is a greater stumbling-block than the other. Again, you worship men and women that are deceased, whom you call your saints; these you do not only desire to pray for you, but you also direct your prayers unto them; asking of them the same blessings and favours as you do of God himself, and which are beyond the power of any creatures in heaven or earth to give. To these you build temples, erect altars, burn incense, make vows and promises, and the like. And, which is more than this, you adore and worship the very images and reliques of such. We Jews are better instructed than to adore any image either of a creature, or of the creator himself. We have the second commandment of the holy-law of God in high esteem, though you have sinfully laid it by, and made an irrational, ridiculous division of the tenth commandment, that you may still keep the number of ten. We look upon it as a pitiful evasion, a silly salvo, to say you do not worship the image, but God in it; or that your worship terminates in God and not in the image. The Pagans knew as well as you that their images were not gods themselves, and they worshipped them not as gods, but as the representers of some deity. So some of them have expressly said, *It is the gods that we worship by images*. They were not so simple, as to think there were as many *Jupiters* or *Apollos*, as there were images of them in the world. When our fathers fell into idolatry, and made them a golden calf, it is evident they intended to terminate their worship in God, and to adore him under that symbol of his presence: they were not so sottish, as to think that the calf that was newly made, and that of materials which they brought out of *Egypt*, was that God that made them, and brought them out of the land of *Egypt*: and yet this is their language concerning the image they had formed. *These are thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt*: which can bear no other sense, but that they took it for the symbol and representation of that God that brought them thence. And the reason why they pitched upon a

calf for such a representation, is this, because they had lived long in *Egypt*, where golden bulls were the symbols of their chief god, *Osiris*.

I need not further to dilate upon this matter: you easily understand what I mean; it is your idolatry in the forementioned particulars that makes us irreconcilable to the christian religion. We have learned to shun this abomination, for which God was angry with our fathers, and so angry that he hath visited this iniquity upon their children unto many generations. Some of our masters have said, that there is no punishment upon *Israel*, but there is still an ounce of the golden calf in it; that is, God doth still remember against us the idolatry of our forefathers, to punish us for it. We are resolved therefore to keep at the greatest distance from this sin, and to have nothing to do with the christians, till they keep themselves from idols."

Mr. B. "It is too manifest to be denied, that there is too much of idolatry practised amongst many that call themselves christians; and God forbid that I should once open my mouth to vindicate or palliate their miscarriages in this kind: but yet you must give me leave to inform you, that the Holy Catholick Church, or the generality of christians, do as much detest this abominable practice, as you Jews do or can; it is only found with a schismatical sect or party amongst us, to wit, the Papists. These are they (as I told you at our former meeting) that have abused the world, and scandalized infidels with many forged and fictitious miracles; and these are they likewise that defile themselves, and offend the Jews with their idolatrous practices: you know better than to impute the misbehaviour of a particular sect of christians to the christian religion in general; it is as if we should impute the mistakes of the *Sadducees* to the whole nation of the Jews, and say they all deny there is any resurrection, or angel, or spirit, because this was the folly and misbelief of that particular sect. The Papists amongst us, are such as the *Sadducees*, or rather the *Samaritans* were among the Jews, who apostatiz'd and revolted from the true religion, and worshipped they knew not what; and of whom it is recorded in the scripture, *That they feared the Lord, and served their own gods*. Though the Papists are christians in
name

name, yet in reality, they are anti-christians, and great adversaries to Christ and the christian religion. The whole christian world cry out upon them, for reviving and establishing the idolatry of the Heathens in the church of Christ. The Pagan idolatry was the sampler and pattern of popish idolatry, and the one is exactly parallel with the other. *Hesiod, Plato, Plutarch*, and the other heathen authors, have given us an account of the *Ethnick* theology and idolatry; how they acknowledged and adored an inferior sort of deities, which they called *Dæmons*, which were a middle sort between the sovereign heavenly gods and mortal men. That these *Dæmons*, as to their original, were the deified souls of worthy men, and great heroes, after their death; (though some of them were of a superior quality, and were never imprisoned in mortal bodies); that as to their office, they were as agents or mediators between the sovereign gods and men; that the way of worshipping them, and of receiving benefits by them, was to bow down to their images, and to adore their reliques, to temple them, and the like. All this is imitated and upheld by these Papists in their worshipping (as you have noted) of saints, their reliques and images. As for their idolatry in worshipping a wafer, or a cup of wine, that also may be reduced to image-worship, as being the adoration of a sign or symbol; and to speak freely, I think it a degree above the abomination of the Pagans; for though possibly, they supposed some presence of their *Dæmons* in their images, yet they could not be so blockish as to think the images and symbols to be transubstantiated into them. Nevertheless the idolatry of this wicked and antichristian crew, may serve to establish, rather than stagger, your faith in the belief of the Gospel and of the New Testament, because therein it was foretold, that in the latter times such a generation should arise, as should *apostatize from the faith, and give heed to spirits of error, and doctrines of Dæmons*, DIDASKALIAIS DAIMONION; some render the words, *Doctrines of Devils*, but they are better rendered, *doctrines of, or concerning Dæmons*; the genitive case (as some have observed) being here to be taken passively for the objects of those doctrines; so that it is a plain prediction of the reviving of the *Gentiles* idolatrous theology of *Dæmons* amongst

amongst a sort of revolting and apostatizing Christians, as the papists are ; and the event hath answered the prophecy. And to the same purpose I might shew you how *Rome*, the chief seat of this *Pseudo-christian*, or antichristian sect or party, is called *Babylon* more than once in the scriptures of the New Testament, yea, *great Babylon*, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth. *Babylon*, in the letter, was the parent or founder of the worshipping of Dæmons. *Baal* or *Bel*, the first king of *Babel* after *Nimrod*, was the first that ever was deified or reputed a god after his death ; thence afterwards they called all other Dæmons *Baalim* ; 'tis with respect hereto that *Rome* is called *mystical Babylon* ; from thence proceeds all this idolatrous and Dæmon-worship, for which you are so offended at the christians. The apostle *John*, in the book called his *Revelation*, doth farther tell us, that the Christian Church (which he calls *the holy City*) shall be trod under foot by the Gentiles forty-two months, that is, it shall be overwhelmed with the Gentile idolatry. And again, he speaks of a huge army that shall come upon the christian world, and destroy a third part of men (which we take to be meant of the *Ottoman* or *Turkish* invasion, which hath swallowed up so great a part of Christendom) ; and yet for all this, those which remain will not repent of their sins, that they should not worship Dæmons, and idols of gold and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk ; no, they are hardened in their wickedness and idolatry, and no plagues or judgments of God upon them will turn them from it. But whither hath my zeal against this popish and pestilent sect carried me ? I pray you, Sir, to believe, that all Christians are not Papists, or popish idolaters ; tho' they abound still in some countries (in which it may be you have been most conversant, as I remember I hinted to you at our last meeting), yet, blessed be God, of late years they are greatly diminished. Time was when the most of these European nations did drink of the wine of the wrath of this mystical Babylon's fornication, and the kings of the earth did commit fornication with her ; but now they begin to hate her, and many nations, and million of particular christians are come out of her ; this is the happy
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case of the city and nation in which you now reside. I appeal to you whether you have seen or heard of any of the forementioned idolatries since you came hither. Let this therefore lie no longer as a block or stone of stumbling in your way. The Lord cure you of this and all other prejudices against Christ and Christianity; O' that he *who so loved the world, as to give his only begotten son*, would give you to believe in him, that *so believing in him, you might not perish, but have everlasting life.* This is that stone which was set at naught of you builders, and is now become the head of the corner; neither is there salvation in any other, nor any other name under heaven given among men whereby they may be saved."

R. J. "Sir, I am obliged to you for your patience and pains in hearing and answering my objections. I have this to request of you, that you will please to tell me your name, and the place of your abode, and give me and some others leave to wait upon you, to receive information about some particulars which are not proper at this time and place to be proposed."

Mr. B. told him his name, and where he dwelt, and added, that he should be heartily glad to see him, and any he should bring with him, at his house; and did hope they should be better acquainted. Upon this they saluted each other in a friendly sort, and the company broke up and departed. Father S. and Mr. B. tarried a while behind; and when they two were alone, Father S. gave Mr. B. his hearty thanks, and told him, that he was now farther satisfied that the principles and practices of the Roman Catholics were a means of hardening and scandalizing the poor Jews; that he, for his part, for that and other reasons, should forthwith become a Protestant; but that two things did retard his conversion.

1. The divisions that were among the Protestants; he did not know to which party (they were so many) he should betake himself.

2. The dangers he should incur from the Papists, and particularly from those of his own fraternity, the *Jesuits*, who would certainly some time or other assassinate or murder him. This being their avowed principle, that it is law-
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ful to kill any man that shall forsake his order, and publish the crimes of his society, if there be no other means to hinder him.

Mr. B. told him he did not question the removal of these two remoras. As to the first, said he, which is, the divisions amongst the Protestants, it is grounded upon a misrepresentation or mistake. I am able to demonstrate that there is a greater union among the Protestants, than among the Papists: if you peruse the several confessions of faith in all the reformed churches, you shall find no material differences; they all accord in the main articles of religion, or in those points which are the vitals and essentials of the christian faith; their differences are about church-discipline, and modes of worship, for the most part; wherein each party, according to the light they have received, endeavour to come the nearest they can to the rule that Christ hath prescribed; it is true, there are many heterodox, heady, high-minded, half-witted persons that go under the general name of Protestants, such as *Seekers*, *Socinians*, &c. which we disown; and they are no more of us than they are of you: nay, we have good reason to believe, that these upstart sects among us, are of your begetting; therefore it is meet that you should father them. Though the Protestants go under several denominations, as *Calvinists* and *Lutherans* abroad, and as *Episcopalians*, *Presbyterians*, and *Independents* here at home; yet it is idle and ridiculous to think that, because they are of these several denominations, they are of several religions. Do you like to have it said there are many different religions in the papacy, because there are found many different orders and denominations therein, as *Thomists*, *Scotists*, *Jesuits*, *Jansenists*, *Molinists*, *Dominicans*, *Franciscans*, and the like? We should be sorry to hear of such differences and divisions among us, as are among the several parties in the church of *Rome*. How great are their differences about matters of order and government? The controversies between the Conformists and Nonconformists with us, are not like the controversies between the Regulars and Seculars with them about episcopal jurisdiction. Again, how great are their differences about matters of faith and doctrine? They are utterly divided and disagreed about that
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very power in which they should unite, and which, they pretend, should agree them in other things: one half of them are for the sovereignty of a Pope above a Council, and the other of a Council above a Pope. The Pope's personal infallibility is a great article of faith among the *Jesuits*, when others in the *Roman* church (and those persons of no small note and name) declare it to be downright heresy. It is a matter of faith with the *Dominicans*, that all persons (Christ only excepted) were born in sin; but others contend earnestly for the immaculate conception of the virgin *Mary*; it is a matter of faith with the *Jansenists* and *Dominicans*, to attribute unto God predetermination, and the only praise of converting grace; but the *Jesuits* and *Molinists* are otherwise opinioned. The deliverance of souls from purgatory by the prayers of the living, is a matter of faith in the church of *Rome*; but I can tell you of some great names (members of that church) who stiffly deny it, and say it was a novel opinion introduced by *Gregory* the first, against the consent of antiquity. What need more instances! you may find many such like in the *Jansenian's Mystery of Jesuits*; the book is worth your reading, the author a Papist, and a man of note and learning. The case being thus, it seems something strange that you should be so much stumbled at the differences amongst the Protestants; when I can easily make it appear (as I have done in part already) that there is far more unity and concord among them, than among the Papists.

As to the second obstruction, which is the danger you run by renouncing Popery, from those of your own fraternity: I have three things to offer for the removing of it.

1. That this practice and principle of the *Jesuits* makes all sober men to abhor the popish religion; they conclude it cannot be the true christian religion, for that needs not assassinations, murders, and such like wicked artifices to uphold and propagate it. God will have *no man or men to speak or act wickedly for him: their religion is vain, and their damnation is just, who do apparent evil under a pretence they may do good thereby*. This consideration, therefore, instead of delaying, should hasten your renunciation of Popery and *Jesuitism*.

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Rf 2. All that are Christ's disciples and Christians indeed, are contented to deny themselves, and to part with all, even with life itself for his sake: He hath told us plainly, that if *any man come to him, and hate not his own life, he cannot be his disciple.* And again he said, *That he that will save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for his sake, shall save it.* Pray sir, consider, if you cannot come up to this degree of self-denial, to be willing to lose and lay down your life for Christ, you will be but a nominal christian, and an hypocrite; and then it matter not (as to your eternal salvation) whether you continue a papist, or become a protestant.

3. There are several protestant princes and states, who will protect you, and secure you from the rage and malice of these cut-throat *Jesuits*. You now reside in a protestant kingdom, and under a protestant king, from whom, in such a case, you may expect sufficient countenance."

Father S. after a short pause, thus replied: "Sir, I am abundantly beholden to you for your free and familiar discourse with me, for which I shall ever honour and esteem you. You have spoken much in a little, and fully removed those two blocks that I mentioned, as lying in my way. I shall shortly visit you (with your leave) at your own house, and there advise farther with you about the things we have now discoursed." Mr. B. told him, he should at any time be heartily welcome to him; and so they parted. I could wish myself behind a curtain when they have their next meeting. If this account may be of use to yourself, or any other, it is a sufficient satisfaction to him, who is, dear Sir,

Yours in many Obligations,

N. H.



F I N I S.

